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BRITISH SOUTH-CENTRAL AFRICA.

I.

THE district of Central Africa under review in this article may be taken roughly to be bounded as follows: On the west by the Upper Zambezi and the affluents of the Lualaba; on the north by the Congo Free State, the north end of Lake Moero, the south end of Lake Tanganyika, and the new Anglo-German boundary between Nyasa and Tanganyika; on the east by Lake Nyasa, by the Upper Shire River, by Lake Shirwa, and the River Ruo; and on the south by the Portuguese possessions and the River Zambezi.

This is emphatically Livingstone's land. By his several great journeys he unconsciously marked out its boundaries; and the result of recent political work, following on the missionary and trading enterprise which sprang from Livingstone's appeals, has tended with strange coincidence to include within British boundaries the bulk of the territories made known to us by Livingstone's researches, and imperishably connected with the story of his life and death. Livingstone, first of all white men, explored the whole course of the Zambezi, which constitutes so much of the southern and western boundaries of our new province; Livingstone first mapped out the Shire districts, Lake Shirwa, and the west coast of Lake Nyasa, the eastern limits, in short, of our Central African protectorate; Livingstone first discovered the south end of Lake Tanganyika, Lake Moero, and the Lualaba, which roughly bound

our sphere of influence on the north; and, lastly, Livingstone died on the southern shores of Lake Bangweolo, right in the centre of what is now about to become British Central Africa. Livingstone's work in this district has been ably seconded and continued by men like Dr. (now Sir John) Kirk, Westbeach, Selous, Lieutenant Young, Dr. Stewart, Dr. Laws, Joseph Thomson, the two Moirs, Consuls Hawes and O'Neill, F. Arnot, Captain Hore, and Alfred Sharpe; and these among them have mapped out much of the Zambezi basin and the shores of Tanganyika and Nyasa. Their work, too, superadded to that of Livingstone, has prepared the way for the taking over of these fine territories by the British Crown.

At such a rate nowadays does the British Empire increase in extent that almost every year some fresh tract of country is added, about which the general public finds itself ignorant and requires to be instructed. It is only two years ago since I gave a general description of the territories in Eastern Equatorial Africa allotted, in agreement with Germany and the Sultan of Zanzibar, to the Imperial British East African Company, and a little later I sketched out the main features of the lands covered by the Niger or Oil Rivers' protectorate. And now I am asked to describe the characteristics of our new acquisitions between the Zambezi and Tanganyika. Of much of this portion of South-Central Africa I cannot speak from personal knowledge, and can only refer my readers to the writings of Livingstone, Selous, Arnot, Serpa Pinto, and Lieutenant Giraud, besides various scattered papers in the *Proceedings* of the Royal Geographical Society by Consul H. E. O'Neill, Captain Hore, and Mr. Alfred Sharpe. For myself, I am going to confine my remarks mainly to the Shire Highlands, Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika, and the plateau lying between these two lakes.

Until the railway is completed from Kimberley through Bechuanaland and Mashunaland to the Zambezi, the readiest mode of access to British Central Africa will be from the Indian Ocean, up the Rivers Zambezi and Shire, either viâ Quilimane, overland to the Zambezi, above the delta, or straight from the sea up one of the Zambezi mouths, the Tshinde for choice.

The lower Zambezi and the River Shire, as far as the confluence of the Ruo, are navigable for light-draught river steamers all the

year round. Above the junction of the Shire and the Ruo, which, by the bye, is the Portuguese boundary, navigation is always open for boats and canoes; but during the months of September, October, November, and December the river between the Ruo and Katunga (Blantyre port), is too low and tortuous in its channels to admit of biggish steamers or boats drawing more than 18in. of water passing up or down. A short distance above the Ruo confluence, one enters the Elephant Marsh, a district of great grassy flats, flooded occasionally when the Shire overflows its banks, but ordinarily a dry, level stretch of prairie dotted with pools of water. At the close of the dry season, when the tall grass has been burnt down, and there is little or no cover for the game to hide in, it is really a remarkable spectacle, as seen from the deck of a steamer, to watch the great herds of big animals wandering over these savannahs in search of the young verdure springing up amid the charred stubble of the old grass. With an opera-glass you may distinguish water-buck, gnu, buffalo, eland, pallah, reed-buck, and zebra; and occasionally some dark blue-grey blobs, much larger than the other specks and forms which are in the vicinity, turn out to be elephants. Occasionally, a lion has been known to come down to the river and stare at the steamer, and it has once or twice happened that these beasts have actually been shot from the deck in passing. Both in the Elephant and Morambala* Marshes, and in the Upper Shire the hippopotami are a real source of danger and inconvenience to any boats of ordinary size which are not propelled by steam, and in the development of the Shire navigation it is essential that they should be exterminated.

Above the Elephant Marsh, where there is little sign of man's presence, the banks of the Shire again become inhabited. Since passing the Ruo, one has entered the country dominated by the Makololo Chiefs, who claim to possess the country on both banks of the Shire, from a little distance below the confluence of the Ruo. South of the Ruo, however, they are rather hunters and traders than residents, and the confluence of the Ruo very fitly marks their southern boundary.

* The Morambala Marsh is on the Lower Shire, below the Ruo. Both these marshes represent old lakes through which the Shire originally flowed.

About fifty miles of intricate navigation above the Ruo—the river looping and winding continually—brings you to Katunga, the port of Blantyre. Katunga is practically the highest point to which the Lower Shire can be navigated. Between Katunga and Matope the Shire is unnavigable owing to its numerous falls (the Murchison Rapids, in which the river descends about 1,000ft.), and its swift current. At Katunga you are very near the commencement of the Shire Highlands, and two or three miles along the African Lakes Company's road brings you to the foot of a long and winding ascent of the hills. The road is tolerably well made, but it might be better adapted for wheeled traffic. With a little engineering skill, and a few months of hard work by industrious native navvies, a carriageable highway might be made from Katunga to Mandala, and Mandala to Matope, where the navigation of the Shire recommences, a stretch of land transit about fifty-five miles in length.

Mandala* is the name given to the African Lakes Company's settlement, which is practically united with Blantyre, the well-known colony of the Church of Scotland Mission. The two towns are about a mile apart, with a well-made road uniting them, and running between a magnificent avenue of tall trees. Blantyre-Mandala is a very satisfactory and encouraging British settlement in Tropical Africa, and fully merits all the fuss which has been made about it; and no one who has known Blantyre of late years, and the industrious, energetic people who reside there, can wonder at the pride which the Scotch feel in its creation, or the tenacity with which they have clung to the hope of its being governed by the British; but, except for the obstinacy of the Scotch in holding on to the Shire Highlands, and by so doing making that wilderness of rocks and scrubby trees blossom as the rose, and, further, from the fact that by keeping a hold on the River Shire above the Ruo we obtain an uninterrupted waterway from Nyasaland to the ocean,

* As a curious instance of the origin of names in Africa, it might be mentioned that "Mandala" means literally "looking-glasses" or "spectacles," and was the nickname given by the natives to Mr. John Moir, a joint manager of the Lakes Company, who first established himself near Blantyre. The nickname then came to be given to the place he dwelt in. "Blantyre" has been transformed by native pronunciation into "Bulantaya."

the Shire Highlands, as Nature made and left them, are a region of no great value, especially as compared with the much richer lands which border on the west coast of Nyasa. They are devoid of mineral wealth, as far as we yet know; the soil is, in most parts, poor and thin; the water supply is not particularly abundant; the forests scanty and ill supplied with timber trees; and the natives, who are a mixture of Yao and Mañanja, are lazy, thievish, quarrelsome, and improvident. The climate, in some favoured districts, such as Blantyre and on the beautiful heights of the Zomba Mountain, is healthy for Europeans, but not more so than all other elevated portions of Nyasaland, while in many parts of the Shire Highlands the healthiness of the climate is very doubtful. But it simply amounts to this, that the Scotch settlers will not be discouraged; and even if they did not originally find the Shire Highlands a place of beauty and fertility, they are fast making them into a prosperous colony; moreover, undoubtedly this district commands the waterway to Lake Nyasa.

At Matope the African Lakes Company has an important station whence the water carriage extends continuously to the north end of Lake Nyasa. Owing, however, to the same causes which affect the navigation of the Shire between Katunga and the Ruo—viz., sandbanks and snags—it is not generally deemed desirable that the company's bigger steamer, the *Domira*, should pass up and down the Shire, so she generally stops at Mponda or Monkey Bay, and the intermediate service is carried on by a smaller steamer, the *Ilala*, and by sailing-boats.

The country through which the Upper Shire passes is a very desirable land, a broad, slightly undulating plain, magnificently fertile and well watered, a land eminently suited for the growth of coffee, cotton, sugar-cane, tobacco, and other tropical produce. The inhabitants are half Wa-yao and half A-nyanja, the former being the ruling caste. The Wa-yao are a truculent, quarrelsome, drunken set of people, drunken notwithstanding the Mohammedanism they affect as their belief. Indeed, I was forcibly struck with the fact that, in spite of the precautions taken by the African Lakes Company and the missionaries, by which all European forms of alcohol are rigidly excluded from the Shire Highlands and Nyasa-

land, the district was the most drunken part of Africa I ever travelled in. I never saw before in Africa such an extent of habitual drunkenness as I witnessed among the people inhabiting the shores of Nyasa, the banks of the Shire, and the Shire Highlands. A little distance above the town of Mponda, a well-known Yao chief, whose father was a great friend of Livingstone, the Shire broadens and the great expanse of Nyasa comes into view. There is a bank of sand stretching right across the entrance of the river, on which there is not much more than 5ft. of water in the dry season, although on either side of this bank, especially on the lake side, the depth rapidly increases to several fathoms. This obstacle could, no doubt, be easily dredged away ; as, however, the steamers at present on the lake do not draw more than 4ft. 6in., they are not much affected by the existence of this sandbank on their visits to Mponda.

It is a matter of considerable interest to those who have in view the development of these regions whether or no there is a gradual drying-up of the Central African lakes. In the case of the Albert and Albert Edward Nyanzas, and of the Victoria Nyanza, there certainly seems to have been a continual shrinkage going on for a long period, and proceeding with some rapidity. Rukwa, the salt lake between Tanganyika and Nyasa, is but the vestige of what was once an imposing sheet of water. Before very many centuries are over it will be a salt-encrusted plain and valley, unless the rainfall which has almost deserted its watershed should revive and renew its stagnant waters. Tanganyika seems to alternately rise and fall, according as its outlet, the Rukuga, is barred with sand and matted vegetation, or freed from that natural dam for awhile by the pressure of the overful lake. Nyasa has been steadily falling in level for years, and at one time, not long since, it seemed as though the lake would soon sink below the bed of the Shire and cut off that outlet ; but the last year or two it has begun to rise again, and during the last rainy season was computed to be 5ft. higher than the preceding year. According to the natives' belief it rises and falls in cycles of sixty years. Southern Nyasa is very deficient in good harbours ; there are, in fact, only two safe and convenient ports at the south end of the lake, and these

are Livingstonia and Monkey Bay (Lusumbwe), which are situated near the extremity of the peninsula of Cape Maclear. They are both in the hands of the English; Livingstonia was purchased from the late Mponda, some fifteen years ago, by the Free Church Mission; and Monkey Bay has been recently sold by the present Mponda to the African Lakes Company. Monkey Bay is not only a good harbour, but offers some of the prettiest scenery in all the coast line of Nyasa. The entrance to the bay is narrow, but quite free from rocks, and the harbour is chiefly protected by a string of quaint islets, each like a little independent mountain placed in the water.

The east coast of Nyasa does not offer such advantages for trade and settlement as the west coast. The northern half of the eastern littoral is an almost unbroken range of stupendous mountains, the Livingstone range, rising in parts to over 8,000ft., and emerging so abruptly and perpendicularly from the waters of the lake (which, it might be mentioned, are of much greater depth on the east coast than on the west) that there is a very narrow fringe of flat, cultivable shore, and sometimes even hardly enough beach to land on. The population appears to be scanty and to consist of a miserable tribe called the Ba-kese or Ba-kisi, who are perpetually raided by the Magwangwara, a Zulu tribe living on the plateau behind them. The southern half of the east coast is rather thickly inhabited, and though very mountainous still offers a broader fringe of flat shore than further north. This country is in the hands of powerful Mohammedanised Wa-yao chiefs, who are a distinctly bad set of people, and great slave-dealers.

The Universities' Mission, however, has long and gallantly struggled to establish itself along the east shore of Nyasa, and is slowly but surely making its way among the brutal, bloodthirsty Yao people as well as among the timid and crafty A-nyanja and Ba-kisi. Its headquarters are on the little island of Likoma (about six miles long and two broad), just off the middle of the east coast, and one of a little archipelago of islets which stretch across the centre of Nyasa, all of which belong to the Universities' Mission.

The west coast of Nyasa, however, which is now placed under British protection, is a district well worth having. It mainly con-

sists of a strip of exceedingly fertile plain in its southern portion; of cool, healthy, hill country in the centre; and of more plain and park land in the north. The main part of the southern half of west Nyasa is ruled over by a strong and intelligent Arab, Jumbe, Sultan of Marimba, who is very friendly to the English. Jumbe's country is very rich in minerals and in ivory, besides producing enormous quantities of rice of the best quality, and other food stuffs. Cattle also thrive here, and the land, though low-lying in parts, is not unhealthy. I might also mention that it possesses in certain districts hot medicinal springs, some of them reputed to be good for skin diseases; one of these hot springs rises in the rocky country two miles behind Jumbe's town of Kotakota. The water is very nearly boiling as it wells up from the peaty soil. There are several of these little hot fountains, the overflow of which unites into a single stream of hot water, which eventually joins another stream coming down from the mountain, which is perfectly cold, and, at the place of their juncture, you can have the most enjoyable bath by first plunging into the warm water and then into the cold. These hot springs occur at intervals all the way up the west coast of Lake Nyasa, right to the north end, and are, no doubt, connected with the signs of volcanic action manifested in the country by the presence of extinct volcanic cones, and the slight earthquake shocks, which are not of uncommon occurrence. Where Jumbe's rule ceases—about halfway up the west coast of Nyasa—the Atonga country begins, a strip of land lying between the Angoni highlands and the lake shore, and ruled over by a number of petty chiefs. The capital of this district is Bandawe, the head-quarters of the Free Church Mission—another Blantyre in its civilisation and comfort, but unfortunately not in its climate, which is not particularly healthy. Bandawe is also an unsafe anchorage for steamers, and when the lake is rough, which it is about every three days, the surf on the beach renders landing and embarking difficult and disagreeable. Nevertheless, in spite of these disadvantages, Bandawe is the most comfortable place of sojourn in all Nyasa.

The work that the Free Church Mission has done here, under the leadership of Dr. Laws, is really remarkable. There are

dwelling-houses which would be thought comfortable in England, and which, with their low-thatched roofs, small paned bow-windows, climbing roses, and gardens with neat flower-beds, might be old-fashioned farmhouses transplanted entire, with all their surroundings, from our own country. There is a spacious school—on Sundays a church—which is capable of holding 500 or 600 people. On weekdays I have myself counted over 400 scholars in the school. There is a workshop and a printing-press, which is perpetually at work turning out primers and "first" and "second" reading-books, translations of the Scriptures, tales and easy lessons in geography and natural history in the Tshi-nyanja, Tshi-tonga, Tshi-ngoni (Zulu), Tshi-nkonde, and the Iki-nyikiusa languages. There are brakes of pineapples, which Dr. Laws was the first to introduce into the country; orchards of oranges and limes; and tidy plantations of local vegetables. Altogether, Bandawe, with its little colony of five Europeans, its large school of native children, its dependent villages of friendly natives, and its general air of brisk industry and cheerful comfort, is one of the most creditable and agreeable results of British missionary enterprise which ever gladdened the eyes of a traveller weary with the monotonous savagery of African wilds. Here one feels in touch with Europe. This little colony is provided with an admirable library, slowly amassed by Dr. Laws. There are all the latest books, reviews, magazines, and newspapers which are likely to prove of general interest, or which deal with special subjects such as philology, engineering, or farming. Dr. Laws is a Doctor of Medicine, and a practised surgeon. He possesses a large and well-stocked dispensary, and heals the diseases of an ever-widening circle of savages, besides being the principal medical adviser to all Europeans on Nyasa. This man, with his fifteen years of whole-hearted devotion to Nyasaland, and his energy in doing good, which has made him learn to make bricks himself in order that he may teach others; which has led him to become a practical engineer, carpenter, joiner, printer, photographer, farrier, boat-builder, and druggist, so that he might induct his once savage pupils into these arts and trades; which has made him study medicine and surgery to heal the bodies, and sufficient theology to instruct the minds of

these Africans, about whom he never speaks with silly sentiment and gush, but whose faults, failings, and capabilities he appraises with calm common-sense—Dr. Laws, with these qualities of *truly* Christian self-devotion, should justly be regarded as the greatest man who has yet appeared in Nyasaland.

In the vicinity of Bandawe, the plain which has skirted the southern half of western Nyasa gradually narrows and disappears, and the mountains here come down to the shore of the lake and continue to follow the coast for a considerable distance towards the north, until after culminating in Mount Waller, a striking table-mountain on the north-west of Nyasa, they begin once more to fall back into the interior, and give place to the great and fertile Konde flats, which extend to the extreme northern point of the lake.

To a traveller arriving from the south end of Nyasa, the flat Konde country along the north-west shore appears to be a more tropical-looking land than any he has yet seen ; the trees are larger and shadier, and the vegetation is more luxuriant. The country is certainly of a more pleasing aspect and the scenery undeniably beautiful, for the east gulf of Nyasa, with its intensely blue waters, and the Konde plain, with its emerald-green banana plantations and bosky groves of umbrageous trees, are framed in by mountains of stupendous height on the one hand, of graceful outline and varied colouring on the other. At the close of the dry season, when I arrived at Karonga (the African Lakes Company's station, which may fitly be called the capital of the Konde district), it was a grand sight, on a dark, moonless night, to see apparently in the sky a more-than-semicircle of flame-streaks girdling in our little world, for the bush fires which were raging high up the hill-sides marked out the mountains at night with long streaks and crests of fire, as if an illumination on a gigantic scale had endeavoured to limn some huge fire device in the sky. The view of the lofty Livingstone Mountains, seen across the lake from Karonga, rising up a jagged wall of 8,000ft. above the purple-blue waters of Nyasa, their ravines a dull green with forest, and their scarped and sculptured sides painted in red and violet, stone-grey, and yellow ochre, and grey-blue on the misty summits, with occasional white flecks of water-falls, and bluish-white puffs of smoke from the smouldering bush-

fires, formed one of those bits of beautiful scenery which might be placed in an album among the hundred finest views of the world.

There are no fewer than nine perennial rivers, some of them of considerable volume, flowing into the lake between Karonga and Parumbira Bay, a station of the Lakes Company, on the extreme north-east corner of Nyasa, and the moisture which percolates from them through the soil gives the Konde plain an appearance of perpetual spring. The land at the north end of the lake is a veritable African Arcadia. You may walk miles and miles through banana plantations; then you emerge on wide-stretching fields of maize and millet and cassava. All the oozy water-meadows are planted with rice; but, above all, the great wealth of the country is in cattle, which, elsewhere by no means common in Nyasaland, thrive remarkably in the Konde district, and, consequently, milk and beef are cheap and abundant. The inhabitants of this happy land are a contented, pleasant-dispositioned folk, who knew no trouble until the Arabs sought to subdue them a few years ago. The Wa-konde carry their Arcadian simplicity of life and manners into the matter of clothing, which it may be generally said they absolutely lack, for, except a coil of brass or copper wire, which the men wear about their middle, and a tiny little patch of bead-worked leather, which would be insufficiently large as a kettle-holder, and which the women don as their only scrap of clothing—with these trifling exceptions, the Wa-konde go absolutely naked; not, of course, knowing they were naked (and, consequently, unashamed) until they came more in contact with Europeans, who, as usual, crudely and vulgarly awoke them to a sense of *in*decency, so that at the present time, when approaching Europeans, the Wa-konde strip off a bit of banana-leaf and twist it into their waist-belt as a kind of apron. But away from European influence, in the heart of their banana groves, or in their tree-shaded clean-swept towns, they loll about in graceful attitudes, or stroll in their fields with the easy gait of their untrammelled limbs, and being a very well-proportioned people look like so many bronze statues, which it would be prudish and *banal* to deck with a figleaf. Their skin, I might mention, is well polished daily by being rubbed with cream, the abundance of milk from their herds being so great as to permit of such a luxurious unguent,

which, however, I am bound to admit, gives them rather a rancid smell.

The "Stevenson" road, as it at present exists, or rather the only portion of it really engineered, has proved a somewhat wasted *tour de force*. It has to connect Lake Nyasa with the south end of Lake Tanganyika, and the main difficulties occur in the ascent from the Konde plain, which is at an altitude of 50 or 60ft. above the level of Nyasa, to the great plateau between the two lakes which maintains an average altitude of nearly 5,000ft., and is about 150 miles in breadth. Once on this elevated plain—whence rise the eastern sources of the Congo—the country is so generally level that making a road chiefly consists in clearing a track through the grass. The only difficulties lie in getting up to the plateau from Nyasa, and down from the plateau to Tanganyika, but the last, owing to the greater elevation of Tanganyika, and the more gradual descent of the plateau in that direction, can be effected without much recourse to engineering skill. It is, however, in the construction of a good road through the mountains behind the Konde plain that the crux of the Tanganyika route has lain. It was first intended to make the road start from the north end of Nyasa and pass through the beautiful Buntali country and thence into the valley of the Songwe, and so on up to the plateau; but an unfortunate misunderstanding with the Buntali people, which led to a fight,* compelled the engineers to seek another route, and they eventually chose that which starts from Karonga and passes through the Uwuwandia country. Here for a distance of about seventy miles they made the first part of the Stevenson † road, which traverses a terribly difficult bit of country, and has to be carried round the face of lofty mountains, across yawning ravines, changing river-beds, and uncertain torrents. The cost of maintaining this portion of the road in a "carriageable" condition would be so great that the Lakes Company has decided

* This quarrel has long since been made up, and the Buntali people are now our very good friends, which is a fortunate circumstance, because their country is one of the loveliest parts of this favoured district, and abounds with ample supplies of food. The African Lakes Company, also, and the Free Church Mission, own now considerable portions of Buntali, and have been the protectors of the people during the Arab war.

† Called the "Stevenson road" because Mr. James Stevenson, of Glasgow, subscribed some £10,000 towards the cost of its construction.

to construct an alternative route along the Songwe valley, a little further to the north, which will avoid most of the mountainous country, and join the old Stevenson road higher up and nearer the summit of the plateau.

The general characteristics of the country between Tanganyika and Nyasa are so uniform in the various lands of Wurambia, Wuwiwa, Wunyiha, Wunyamwanga, and Umambwe, that instead of describing these districts in detail I will sketch their principal features in common.

The edge of the great plateau where the River Tshambezi—the farthest eastern source of the Congo—takes its rise is marked by a curiously uniform wall of mountain range, the higher peaks of which probably reach to altitudes of 6,000ft. to 7,000ft. Westward of this are great fertile, sloping prairies, through which innumerable streamlets flow south-westward, to eventually join the River Tshambezi. On the east of this long mountain wall is a stretch of level valley, singularly flat in surface compared to the mountainous country on either side, through which two rivers—their sources divided by a low watershed—flow in opposite directions, the Songwe towards Lake Nyasa, and the Nkana to the River Saisi and the salt lake Rukwa. Again, on the east of this valley lie more mountains and the table-land of Unyika—or Wunyiha, as it is locally called. The Songwe-Nkana valley possesses soil of extraordinary fertility, which is well irrigated by these perennial streams. The table lands on either side, the average elevation of which may be taken at 5,000ft., are of a park-like character, with stretches of green prairie, clumps of fine trees, and occasional patches of woodland. Being very thinly inhabited, well watered, and perpetually green with sweet herbage, they are ranged over by large heads of game. When the country is civilised, they will undoubtedly prove well adapted for the rearing of cattle, horses, and asses. The indigenous population of these lands would all be cattle-breeders if they could, because they fully know how well oxen will thrive in these lands, which are free from the tsetse flie; but again, as in so many other parts of Africa, it is the black man who is the black man's worst enemy. There are three negro tribes which share the opprobrium of being the devastators of this

region, otherwise naturally fitted to become one of the richest and most prosperous parts of Africa. These are the ruthlessly cruel Wa-wemba,* a populous nation living in the lands between the Tshambezi and Lake Bangweolo; the Wa-tuta, who are another section of wandering Zulus (like the Angoni of western Nyasa), and who still exist in the vicinity of south-east Tanganyika; and the A-wungu warriors, from the south end of Lake Rukwa, together with their Wa-nyamwezi allies. Of these, the wickedest and most dreaded are the Wa-wemba, who have at different times very nearly brought about the complete depopulation of the Tshambezi plateau. The Arab raids sink into insignificance before the ferocious ravages of the Wa-wemba, who are perpetually destroying the towns and plantations of their unfortunate neighbours, carrying off the women and children as slaves, and killing all the able-bodied men. I have followed in the Wa-wemba's tracks, and have seen all human life and cultivation stamped out for a distance of fifty miles along the road, where only a short time before the most flourishing villages existed, surrounded by thriving crops, and enriched with abundant supplies of stored grain.

The only hopeful feature in our relationship with the Wa-wemba is that, up to the present time, they have an exaggerated dread of and respect for white men, and carry this so far that they never interfere with the letter-carriers and porters whom the African Lakes Company or Missionaries may send backwards and forwards on the plateau, provided they can show a letter in a cleft stick, or wear a European jacket or trousers, or exhibit any other indubitable sign of their connection with the white men. The natives, also, in the vicinity of the London Missionary Society's stations near Tanganyika find themselves safe from the attacks of the Wa-wemba. Although want of time prevented me from making a journey to the residence of Ketimkuru, the Wa-wemba king, I had reason to believe, from a message transmitted to me from him, through an Ulunga chief to the south of Tanganyika, that I should have been well received, and would have found it not very difficult to enter

* Wa-wemba is the commonest pronunciation given to the name of this people, although to the west they are called "Ba-bemba," and to the east "A-emba." *Bemba* is evidently the root, but in Central Africa "B" and "W" are almost interchangeable.

into a pact with him to cease raiding the native tribes under our protection.

The country at the south end of Lake Tanganyika seems—to judge from the accounts and appearances of the missionaries residing there—to enjoy a fairly healthy climate. The London Missionary Society at present shares, in an amicable way, the evangelisation of Tanganyika with the French fathers of Cardinal Lavigerie's Mission. As yet, there are no other competitors in the field or on the lake. By an unwritten agreement, the French Roman Catholic Mission takes the West and East shores of Tanganyika, and the English Protestants the north and south ends, and part of the Ayasa-Tanganyika plateau. In all, the London Missionary Society has eight agents on or in the vicinity of Tanganyika, four of whom are married and have their wives with them, so that there are twelve English people belonging to the mission in these parts. The work that these men and women have done in the face of great difficulties and of cruel anxieties is surprising. Not long before my visit to Tanganyika, it had gone hard with them. The war between the Arabs and the Lakes Company had cut off their communications with Nyasa by the Stevenson road, and the German war on the east coast had not only severed their overland relations with Zanzibar, but had very nearly cost them their lives, for when the insurrection against the Germans became known in Tanganyika, certain Arabs of Ujiji, who had lost friends or property by the German reprisals, declared all white men were of one race, and proposed to revenge and indemnify themselves by killing the London Missionary Society's agents (and the French fathers too), and seizing the boats and property of the Mission. The Catholic missionaries had long since foreseen Arab hostility to their work, and had prudently trained and armed large numbers of their converts and followers, and so could afford to laugh at Arab threats; but the English missionaries were quite unarmed, save for a few sporting guns. At this juncture, however, the celebrated and much abused Tipu-tipu intervened. From his settlement on the Upper Congo he sent word to his lieutenant in Tanganyika, Muhammad bin Khalfan, to protect the English missionaries and, if necessary, to go to war with the other Arabs on their behalf. This decided

action put a stop to the meditated schemes of assassination and plunder. Muhammad bin Khalfan not only aided the missionaries to transfer themselves and their property from Ujiji and the island of Kavala (on the west shore of the lake) to Niamkōlo, where they would be in a safer position, but also repeatedly furnished them with supplies of rice and other kinds of food, and further supplied them with trade goods—the current money of the country—on credit and at most reasonable terms. Our missionaries at Tanganyika were strongly sensible of what they owed to Tipu-tipu's kindness. One of their number, Mr. Swann, told me that but for this man's intervention no Englishman would have been left alive in Tanganyika at the time when the first news of the German hostilities reached the Arabs at Ujiji. I merely mention this as a set-off against the indictment drawn up—and justly, no doubt—against Tipu-tipu by Mr. Stanley. These Arabs, believe me, are not wholly bad.

The space at my disposal prevents my dilating further on the features of British Central Africa. I have left many districts undescribed, many great questions untouched, and many zealous workers unmentioned, but I trust I have written enough to make some portion of the reasoning public reflect on the advantages we have secured in British Central Africa, and on the work done there by our missionaries and merchants. It is a grand country, this, between the Zambezi and the great lakes—a country of big things—of great mineral wealth, of magnificently fertile soil, of wide rivers, of sea-like lakes, lofty mountains, vast prairies, deep valleys, dense forests, big beasts, and great herds of them; of hundreds of square miles without a human being and of districts swarming with vigorous populations of blacks. It possesses elevated plateaux as large as England in extent, and as healthy in climate as Natal. Among its native products are ivory, ebony, rubber, wax, oil seeds, hides, gums, drugs, and dyewoods, besides the mineral wealth to which I have already alluded. It is an acquisition of which we may well be proud, and which we have fairly won by the labours of those who have toiled there since Livingstone first let in the light.

H. H. JOHNSTON.

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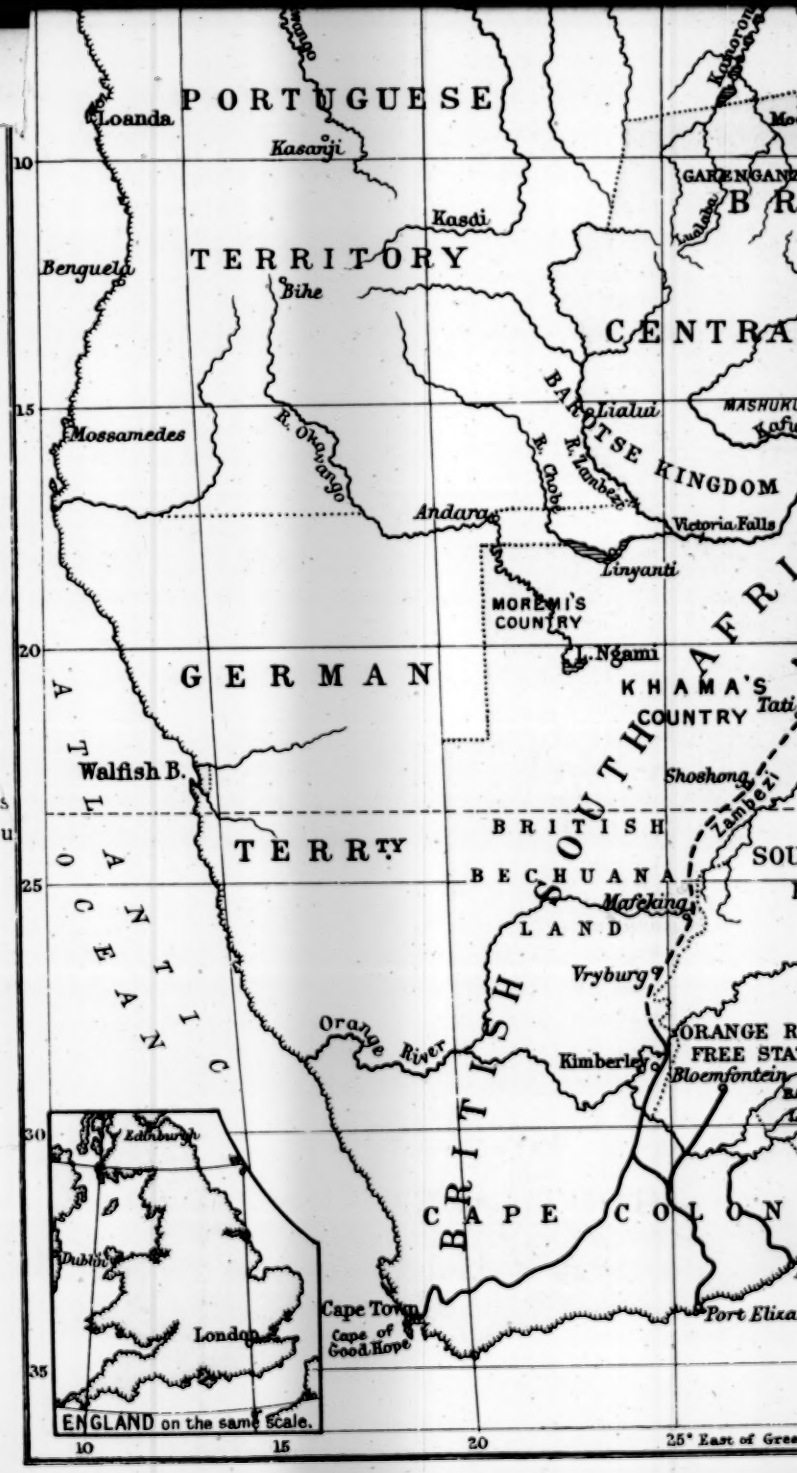
FRENCH CONGO
Kasai
Congo R.
Stanley Pool
CONGO FREE STATE
Upper Congo
Nyangwe
Lulua R.
Lulua burg
Kwango
PORTUGUESE
Loanda
Kasanji
Kasai
Kasai
TERRITORY
Benguela
Bihe
CENTRAL
Lialui
BAROTSE KINGDOM
R. Zambezi
R. Chobe
R. Okavango
Mossamedes
Andara
Victoria Falls
Linyanti
MOREMI'S COUNTRY
L. Ngami
GERMAN
KHAMA'S COUNTRY
Walfish B.
Shoshong
Zambezi
BRITISH BECHUANA LAND
TERRTY
Mafeking
Vryburg
Orange River
Kimberley
ORANGE FREE STATE
Bloemfontein
ATLANTIC OCEAN
BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA
Walvish B.
Sandwich H.
Lüderitz B.
Angra Pequena
CAPE COLONY

30
35
40
Mt Kilimanjaro
BRITISH EAST AFRICA
Mombasa
Wanga
Ujiji
GERMAN
Lake
Tanganyika
TERRITORY
Pemba I.
ZANZIBAR
Bagamoyo
Dar es Salaam
Mafia I.
L. Rukwa
Abercorn
Niamkolo
Kaxembe
Fife
Lindi
BA-BEMBA
Karonga
Lake
Bangweolo
Bandawe
Lake
Nyasa
R. Rovuma
ILALA
Kotakota
NYASALAND
Livingstonia
Monkey Bay
Mponda
L. Shirwa
Mozambique
Zumbo
Matope
SHIRE HIGHLANDS
Blantyre
River Zambezi
Tete
R. Shire
Sena
Quilimane
MASHUNA LAND
MATABELE LAND
Progress
R. Pungwe
R. Zambezi
PORTUGUESE TERRITORY
Sofala
Bulawayo
Railway
Sabi
INDIAN
Limpopo
Tropic of Capricorn
Inhambane
SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC
Lorenzo Marquez
Delagoa Bay
OCEAN
Pretoria
SWASI LAND
AMATONGA LAND
Kosi Bay
Sordwana Bay
St. Lucia Bay
ZULU LD
BASUTO LAND
NATAL
Durban
BRITISH
SOUTH-CENTRAL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Orange River
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ORANGE FREE STA
BRITISH
CAPE COLON
Cape Town
Cape of Good Hope
Port Eliza
Edinburgh
Dublin
London
ENGLAND on the same scale.
10
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25° East of Gree

TERRITORY
Mafia I.
L. Rukwa
Abercorn
Niamkolo
Fife
Lindi
Kaxembe
BA-BEMBA
Karonga
R. Rovuma
Lake
Bangweolo
Bandawe
Lake
Nyasa
Kotakota
ILALA
Livingstonia
Monkey Bay
Mponda
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MATABELE LAND
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PORTUGUESE TERRITORY
Tropic of Capricorn
Inhambane
SOUTH AFRICAN
REPUBLIC
Lorenzo Marquez
Delagoa Bay
OCEAN
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SWASI LAND
AMATONGA LAND
Kosi Bay
Sordwana Bay
ZULU LD
St. Lucia Bay
BASUTO LAND
NATAL
Durban
East London
Port Elizabeth
BRITISH
SOUTH-CENTRAL
AFRICA
Scale 1:15,000,000 (236 m. = 1 in.)
0 50 100 200 300 400
East of Greenwich 30 35 40 45
10 15 20 25 30 35
G. Philip & Son, London & Liverpool.

II.

THE treaty with Germany lately signed by Sir Percy Anderson is the natural outcome of recent events in Africa. There is, I think, little doubt that Englishmen who are acquainted with latest African history very generally approve of the treaty as a whole. Many matters of detail are doubtless open to criticism, but it is well to remember that diplomatic arrangements of the kind under consideration must be founded on a basis of give as well as take.

It is not proposed in this article to discuss those portions of the treaty which more especially refer to the northern and north-eastern country north of the Zambesi; but rather to deal with the country lying south of the Zambesi, and stretching westward, eastward, and southward as far as the borders of the Cape Colony. The first important move in the game was made by Germany in the annexation * of the harbour of Angra Pequena, lying south of Walfish Bay, on the west coast of Southern Africa. That annexation was made the subject of protest by the Government of the Cape Colony, but without result; and the Germans proclaimed a protectorate over Damaraland and the country lying to the eastward. Shortly after this movement in 1884 a certain number of Boer farmers living within the South African Republic became enamoured of the native country lying to the westward of the Republic, and, crossing the border, established themselves in territories which they proclaimed as independent Republics, under the names of Stellaland and Goshenland. Her Majesty's Government of that day became alive to the fact that, as matters then existed, Germany claimed to extend indefinitely eastward from the coast while the two newly-proclaimed Republics stretched indefinitely westward, thus seriously endangering the trade route from the South to Central Africa. The South African Republic was consequently instructed by Lord Derby to withdraw their proclama-

* Approximately 1884.

tion endorsing the action of the filibustering farmers in Stella and Goshen, and an expedition was despatched from England, under Sir Charles Warren, against the two newly-formed Republics. In the result, the Republics of Stella and Goshen were abolished, and the country comprising them was declared British territory as far north as the Molopo river (Mafeking), under the title of British Bechuanaland; while northward from the Molopo, as far as the twenty-second parallel of South latitude, the country was declared to be a British Protectorate. At the same time, a treaty, dated January, 1885, was made between England and Germany by which Germany's eastern border in Damaraland was fixed at the twentieth degree of East longitude. Thus a settlement was made of all territory as far north as the twenty-second parallel of South latitude, but no further; with the natural result that English maps coloured the country to the northward as English, and German maps coloured it as German.

In January, 1887, Germany made a treaty with Portugal defining their several limits up to a point on the Zambesi, some distance to the westward of the Victoria Falls, under which treaty Germany bound herself not to extend northwards into territory claimed in the treaty as Portuguese.

Thus a settlement was made of all westerly country south of the Zambesi, excepting only that portion lying east of the twentieth degree of East longitude and north of the twenty-second parallel of latitude. Most of the territory thus left unapportioned was in the hands of Lobengula, King of Matabeleland, and Moremi, a Bechuana chief, tributary to Khama, chief of the Bamangwatos.

How long matters would have remained stationary is doubtful had not the South African Republic (under President Kruger) forced the hand of the Imperial Government. In 1887 Mr. Kruger sent a mission to Lobengula, with powers to conclude a treaty by which Lobengula was to place himself under the protection of the Republic. Whether Lobengula would ever have consented to such protection is more than doubtful, but the matter was not put to the test. Her Majesty's Government became aware of the step taken, and sent Mr. John Moffat, who, early in 1888, concluded a treaty with Lobengula (and his Indunas acting on behalf of the

Matabele people) by which Lobengula bound himself in amity to her Majesty's Government. Immediately subsequent to this, and with the consent of Lobengula and his people, as well as with the consent of Khama, paramount chief of the Bamangwatos, and of Moremi, tributary chief of Ngamiland, her Majesty's Government proclaimed "a sphere of British influence," whose boundaries were thus defined: On the north by the Zambesi river, on the east by the western border of the Portuguese province of Sofala, on the south by the boundaries already proclaimed, and on the west by the twentieth degree of East longitude.

On the proclamation of this sphere of influence, Mr. Cecil Rhodes, then a gentleman of great wealth and influence in South Africa, and now the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, sent a mission to Lobengula to obtain from him certain concessions within his territory of Matabeleland and Mashonaland, in which he was successful. A company was formed, known as the British South Africa Company, which succeeded in obtaining a charter from her Majesty, as well as the official recognition of her Majesty's Government. Pending operations by the Chartered Company, it was desirable that the boundaries of the sphere of influence on the east and west should be clearly defined. Under the stipulations of the treaty with Germany now before Parliament, the western boundary has been settled thus: While Germany is bound within the twentieth degree of East longitude as far north as the twenty-second parallel of latitude, she extends her boundaries to the north of that to the twenty-first degree up to the eighteenth parallel of latitude, thence eastward, following that parallel to the River Chobe, the line then passing down the middle of the River Chobe to its confluence with the Zambesi. It will thus be seen, by reference to the map, that England recognises Germany's claim to the whole of the territory to the westward of this boundary, and lying to the north of the Cape Colony (with the sole exception of the harbour and water rights of Walfish Bay, which remain English), and that Germany obtains access from her Damaraland territory to the River Zambesi.

It is past argument that it would have been advantageous to England if Germany had not obtained such access, for in such a

case the unappropriated territory north of the Zambesi would have been practically placed outside German influences; but it is a question whether the matter is of that paramount importance which has been ascribed to it. It is quite possible to over-estimate the value of Damaraland; but whether valuable or not, it must be remembered that Germany was suffered in 1884 to take possession of it, and that it is an absolute impossibility to-day to undo the actions of the past. The possession of Damaraland thus ensured, Germany had become a political factor in the West, and could claim at least equal consideration with England in an apportionment of territory. England had, it is true, proclaimed her "sphere of influence," but Germany was no party to this proclamation, and did unquestionably still colour much of that "sphere" as German in her maps.

Her Majesty's Government, in dealing with the question as a whole, was well entitled to consider the advisability of making a small concession in that quarter in order to obtain the friendly co-operation of Germany in the general scheme of South African policy. England does not yield Walfish Bay, nor does she abate her claims to the water rights which have been in the past and still are under discussion. She does not yield valuable territory, inasmuch as the strip of territory to the north of the eighteenth parallel is notably unhealthy, as has been amply proved by the futile attempts of missionaries and others to settle in and colonise the district of Linyanti. Linyanti, one of the earliest scenes of Dr. Livingstone's work, is now given over to desolation, while the ruined huts and abandoned waggons testify to the impracticability of the place as the home of Europeans. What England does give is access to the Zambesi and the possession of one side of one of the most picturesque confluences known, namely, the confluence of the Chobe and the Zambesi. But if scenery and sentiment be suffered to form a factor in diplomatic discussion, let it be remembered that England still holds the glorious Victoria Falls, which constitute one of the greatest beauties of the world. The difficulty of access except through British territory is very great, and it will be many years before Germany can hope to make use of the slight advantage thus gained by her.

We must not lose sight of the fact, moreover, that England's argument has ever been that the Zambesi ought to remain an international waterway, and it is difficult for her, in the face of that argument, to find fair reasons for the exclusion of Germany from the upper waters of that highway.

But if England has suffered some slight diminution of advantage from this decision, let us consider what she has gained. Situated as she was in Bechuanaland, and flanked by the South African Republic, it was all-important that she should have a free hand to the North. A glance at the map will show the vast extent of debatable land assured to her; while her grip upon that land is rendered doubly firm by the friendly co-operation of a great European Power. Ngamiland (including Lake Ngami itself), Matabeleland, and the beautifully fertile territories of Mashonaland are all assured to her by the arrangements now made. True it is that these territories are only to be settled up in co-operation with the friendly chiefs who now rule them; but an amicable solution of the many native questions which must ensue will be rendered doubly easy by a free hand and a clear boundary.

Of the prospects of Ngamiland it is difficult to speak, but taken as a part of the whole it is of importance that we should possess it, and any occupation of it by a foreign Power would have had grave results on our African influence. Of the fertility of Matabeleland and of Mashonaland there is no doubt, while the mineral resources of those countries are believed to be of great value.

Touching for a moment the territories north of the Victoria Falls, undealt with by the new treaty, we are placed in most favourable relations to those countries. Our communications with them are assured, and our influences are already felt by the native rulers and people, so that, when the time arrives that Baroutseland, Batongaland, Mashukulumbweland, and the country about Lake Bangweolo (the death-place of Livingstone) are ripe for development, we may fairly expect to have free and open communication, rendering access to those countries from the south easy and valuable.

Of the prospects of the British South Africa Company it is difficult to speak within the limits of an article dealing with other

matters, but it may fairly be said that the operations of the Company, controlled as they are by the influence of the High Commissioner at Cape Town, are likely to result in permanent advantage to the Empire. Countries are being opened up, money spent, and difficulties overcome which will give a new field for British commerce and British labour. The work being done is not the work of soldiers establishing an unwished-for control, but of sturdy pioneers of civilisation, backed by private capital, and aided only by the influence of Imperialism; and the future work of the Company may well be anxiously followed by those who have the welfare of the Empire at heart.

Our interests south of the Zambesi on the eastern side of the sphere of influence are not directly connected with Germany, but with Portugal, and to some extent with the South African Republic. It will be noticed that in the statement of an eastern boundary England uses the term, "The western boundary of the province of Sofala." No boundary has ever yet been delimited, but there is no reason to doubt that ere long a friendly understanding will be arrived at with Portugal which will settle the questions at issue. To the eastward of Lobengula's territory lies the country known as Gazaland, now under the rule of Gungunhana. How far this chief may be independent, and how far under the control of Portugal, is a matter of doubt, but there is little question that he has played somewhat fast and loose with both sides, and has admitted or denied Portuguese control as occasion demanded.

The claim of Portugal to territory in Mashonaland is, however, founded on the most shadowy basis. At the present time we have it on the best authority (that of Mr. Selous) that the chiefs and people of Mashonaland utterly repudiate any notion of Portuguese control, and that neither by commerce nor by intercourse does Portugal hold established communication with the Mashonas away from the river. Portugal, relying on the plucky journeys of its earlier travellers, endeavours to establish a claim to much of the interior, on the strength of an asserted control during the semi-mythical empire of Mona-Matapa. That the Portuguese were the first in the field there is little doubt, and that they have left behind them relics of an early occupation; but these remains are vastly

over-estimated. "Ruined cities" are spoken of as though civilisation in its modern forms had existed; but in very truth these ruins of antiquity are of the poorest description, and only point to a semi-civilisation slightly in advance of that now existing in the country. The Portuguese were there, but they abandoned the country to take part in the general scramble for Indian Empire, and it was not till English travellers, missionaries, and hunters reopened the country, and pointed out new roads to a better civilisation, that Portugal made any real effort to re-establish practical communication with the interior.

In the possession of Delagoa Bay, however, the Portuguese have a real and practical lever to move the policy of Eastern Africa, for by it not only do they strengthen their possessions in the province of Mozambique, but they become a direct factor in the political life of our South African Colonies, and of the Republican States adjacent to them. It is in the district of Delagoa Bay that the interests of England, Portugal, and the South African Republic become closely intermingled. Portugal holds over forty miles of the Delagoa Bay line, as well as the sea terminus. That portion of the line was until recently in the hands of Colonel McMurdo, an American subject, who, on the faith of a concession from the Portuguese Government, constructed, in conjunction with British capitalists, the line as it stands. As, however, Colonel McMurdo failed to complete his line up to the border of the South African Republic by a given date, his concession was cancelled by Portugal, and possession was taken of the line. As this matter is shortly to go under arbitration, it is somewhat premature to discuss it. But it is well to recollect that Colonel McMurdo was unable to obtain from Portugal, or from any other quarter, an authorised boundary line up to which to construct his line until too late to complete it by the date of his concession. It was not till well on in 1889 that the result of the three-cornered commission of England, Portugal, and the South African Republic, which had assembled to fix the boundaries, became known; and as the McMurdo concession lapsed in, I think, June, 1889, it was quite impossible for the concessionaire to complete the few miles needed in the short time still open.

In this corner of South Africa we have also the debatable

territory of Swaziland, as to which there is much misapprehension. The two Powers interested in the country are England and the South African Republic. Under the Convention of 1884 the independence of Swaziland was guaranteed, but the Convention then went on to say that England may, when necessary, place Commissioners within the native territory, and that the South African Republic must place Commissioners within their own Republic, outside the western border of the native territory, to maintain order and prevent encroachments. Thus England and the Republic do not, as is generally supposed, stand on even terms in relation to Swaziland—England having, although guaranteeing the independence of the Swazies, provided for a system of control and advice through Commissioners to be placed within native territory. The discoveries of gold in Swaziland and the investment of a great amount of British capital in the country have given a new aspect to the policy in that part of Africa; and negotiations are now proceeding, which, it is hoped, will reconcile conflicting interests.

Adjacent to Swaziland we have Amatongaland, a strip of coast line between Portuguese territory and Zululand. Here, again, Portugal steps in, as she claims to have treaties with Zambili, Queen of Amatongaland, to the exclusion of the interests of other nations. England has, however, been successful in concluding a treaty with Zambili, on the same lines as that with Lobengula, King of Matabeleland, which gives guarantees against any foreign control other than that of England.

At the southern end of Amatongaland, abutting on the south-eastern corner of Swaziland and the north-eastern corner of Zululand, as well as in close proximity to the tongue of land belonging to the South African Republic, which is inserted between Swaziland and Zululand, we have the so-called harbour of Kosi Bay. It is doubted whether this bay is of any practical value as a harbour of refuge; but, whether this be so or not, Kosi Bay represents at this moment a Naboth's vineyard to the South African Republic, as the possession of its few miles of coast line would give substantial reality to the Republic as a maritime power. That the settlement of the Kosi Bay question will form part of the general settlement of Swaziland there is no doubt, and the decision arrived

at will largely influence the position which England will take in future South African history.

The internal condition and progress of the South African Republic is one of the most interesting problems in current South African history, and can hardly be dealt with here. A few years back the veritable Cinderella of South African communities, the discovery of her mineral resources has created in her the pole round which South African policy revolves. The revival of trade brought about by recent events in the Republic has given a plethoric revenue, not only to the Republic itself, but to the Cape Colony and Natal, and has roused the Orange Free State out of its peaceful and pastoral lethargy, to take prominent part in contemporary history. The great influx of British subjects into the country has created a political problem which only time can solve, while the advancement of commerce has given rise to a demand for cheap communication which must soon result in a network of railways throughout South Africa.

In dealing with all these questions—German, Portuguese, Republican, and Colonial—England has difficult work before her.

She cannot hope to please all in every detail of her work, but if her broad lines of policy are based upon a desire to maintain a paramount influence in Africa, and to hold fast to that bond of union which should ever unite the Mother Country to her Colonies, she may well expect in return the loyal co-operation of those Colonies, and may rely on the support of all who have the true welfare of the Empire at heart.

RALPH CH. WILLIAMS.

A TRAGEDY WITHOUT WORDS.

PASSION no more in these last days requires
The old stock-rant of vows and darts and fires ;
We quit the frantic stage, and turn to see
A finer art, a tenderer mimicry,
But find, as through this subtler world we rove,
That, tho' a sworn Carthusian, love is Love.

Hear, in a house of peaceful days and nights,
Full of sequestered virtues, cold delights,
How two young souls could, unsuspected, fashion
A long-drawn elfin tragedy of passion.
No vows were made, no sealèd springs were broken,
No kiss was given, no word of love was spoken ;
Among calm faces clustered round the fire,
These two played out their drama of desire.

Who knows what unseen prompter pulled the strings?
What curtain sank and wrapped them round with wings?
Not Bion, not Sebaste ! Yet they know
A wild wind drove their spirits to and fro,
Swept by,—and left them, when it passed away,
Two weary actors in a finished play.

Heaven, air, and earth, spectators nothing loth,
Hung at their lips, surmised, and watched them both ;
What did the March grey sky divine at length
In that sparse wood where the wind spent its strength?
Each twig of ash, stained at the tip with black,
Whipped Bion on, and strained him at the rack ;

Each primrose, darting from the arms of Death,
Dazzled Sebaste, caught her panting breath ;
He plucked a flower, and with a masking jest
Craved leave to lay it on her silken breast ;
She laughed, but though they both dissembled well,
One act was over, and the curtain fell.

Now thro' that noiseless house by day and night
The keen electric storm rose to its height.
What beating hearts, what dewy-glistening eyes,
What breathless questions, what demure replies !
The scented twirls of wood-smoke, thin and blue,
Straight to their inmost souls like incense flew ;
When the logs fell, they started as from sleep,
Watch'd o'er the hearth the smouldering ruin creep,
Stole glances, met in lightning, sped apart,
Each sitting languid with a throbbing heart.

So runs another act ; next morning, see
Another actor, and their parts are three !
That blue-grey form ! that rich and jetty throat !
Hark ! from a russet breast that liquid note !
How like a flash the redstart's sudden flight
Darts warm with love across Sebaste's sight !
How sleek the wings which back discreetly move,—
Like Bion's thoughts that hover round his love !
The shapely bird, those thorny boughs between,
Pours out his song, a god from a machine,
Folds and unfolds his twinkling tail in sport,
Twits now a challenge, now a brisk retort,
And makes the lover-pair so glad and mad
That they could die for joy,—they feel so sad.

But when the snow along the woodland crest
Caught them at dusk, their pain was worst and best.
Within Sebaste's heart the flood rose higher,
A keener perfume blazed across the pyre ;
She felt his breath along her cheek, and glanced

Sidelong, where on dark air his profile danced ;
Her hand lay tingling on his bended arm,
Each finger mad to find the sleeve so warm,
While down her shell-pink cheek, severe and pure,
Long lashes drooped with maiden mirth demure.

This was the hour ! but Bion's swifter heat
Outstepped his pulse, and flung him at her feet,
Tame with excess of boldness just when she
Was ready for the mutual mastery ;
The longed-for moment in the sparkling air,
The frost which twinkled in her tawny hair,
The gathering nonchalance in maiden blood,—
All, all were wasted on his flagging mood ;
The spent bow twanged not, and 'twas all in vain
Sebaste smiled on his uncouth disdain ;
He found no word, till she began to link
A scarlet anger with her white and pink,
And then—'twas worse than none ; and dull and wan
Back thro' the whitening woods went maid and man.

That night the frosty world was whelmed in rain,
With restless feet wearying the window-pane ;
Deep in each silent twilight chamber lay
A heart that weighed the fortunes of the day ;
Slowly the blank night wasted ; sleep at last
Cooled each loud pulse, and closed the eyelids fast.

Sebaste waked ; the pale blue sky peeped in
And helped the cool transition to begin ;
Within her breast the night's cold seal had set
Its deep conviction, " Better to forget " ;
The hour of joyous abnegation past,
The virginal reaction come at last,
She, looking back in wonder at the stir
Of pulses thrilled, held them no part of her,
And pressed her slender wrists with joy to find
Herself restored to her own quiet mind.

Bion, meanwhile, blushing with rage, rehearsed
The uncaptured hour, and his false coldness curst,
Ran o'er the tortures of the dark, and found
No ambush from the archers' stalking-ground,—
No ambush except one, the vow to borrow
From last night's weakness strength to win the morrow,
Nor ever battled in so brave a heat
As now, upon the sting of his defeat.

They met afar; loathing his faint disdain,
With passion seven times heated in his brain,
Bion gazed humbly at her distant eyes,
Noted her questions, weighed her light replies,
Marked when she rose, and joined her at the lawn,
Voiceless, by cords of tender longing drawn.

Silent they stood; then, thro' their lack of speech
Nature once more revealed them each to each.
Close to their very feet a squirrel came,
With feathery tail whisking his ears of flame,
Seized in pink fingers nuts and shreds of cake,
Then in long leaps raced downward to the lake.

Ah! who shall say what bond the creature broke?
What in that moment as in thunder spoke?
Each turned and saw the other's soul unveiled,
Each to the other's secret being scaled;
She read his passion, penitent and wroth,
And pitied,—as a star might do a moth;
He marked her cold conviction, and fell back,
As from an ice-cliff on a mountain track.
The play was done, and after one short sigh,
He stretched his hand to her with just "Good-bye!"
She took it, and—such mercy Heaven extends—
Held it one moment longer than a friend's;
Then on the wet bright sward they turned and went
Self-sentenced each to mutual banishment.

EDMUND GOSSE.

A LECTURE IN DEFENCE OF LECTURES.*

IT is very satisfactory to watch the steady and healthy growth of anything, whether it be a tree in our garden, or a child in our family, or some good work in which we have been allowed to take an active share. In this life so many lans that seem excellent in themselves are doomed to failure that we feel all the more grateful whenever one of them succeeds. When some years ago my friends first explained to me their plan of extending the benefits of University teaching to a wider area, and when at a later time they suggested the idea of inviting those who had attended the lecturers given by members of our University in different centres to spend some weeks in this centre of all centres, within the ancient ivy-clad walls of Oxford, I must confess that I did not feel very confident of success. Still it seemed to me a plan worth trying and the success of the experiment has been much greater than any of us could have expected.

Think that these Oxford University Extension Lectures were started only five years ago. In 1885 to 1886 we began with 27 courses; in the year 1889 to 1890 the number of courses had risen to 148. In the first year the number of places which invited our lecturers was 21; in the last year the number of so-called centres was 109. We do not know what was the exact number of students in the first year, from 1885 to 1886, but last year the number of students reported by the local committees as being in average attendance amounted to 17,904.

This surely is not what the French call *une quantité négligeable.* It exceeds, I believe, the number of students at all the Universities

* Inaugural address delivered at the Opening of the Oxford University Extension Lectures, August 1st, 1890.

of England, Scotland, and Ireland taken together. And what is more important still, attendance on all these courses of lectures is purely voluntary; nay, it often entails an effort and a sacrifice of time and money, and it does not cost the country a single penny. I know that some of my friends consider that we have a very strong claim on Government assistance. I do not deny it. All I say is that nothing gives us such confidence in the healthy growth of what we may call the *People's University*, as seeing it walk so vigorously without the help of crutches. But this very success ought to make us careful, ought to make us consider whether we are really doing the best we can. We have had, no doubt, the approval of the most competent judges, but we have also had our critics, and all through life I have always found it far more useful to listen to those who are against us than to those who are with us. You are aware that the system of imparting instruction by means of lectures, the system on which we chiefly rely, has for some time been subjected to an uncompromising criticism. Lectures are said to be a mere survival of the Middle Ages. Before the invention of printing, and so long as MSS. were rare, it is admitted that teaching could only be carried on by word of mouth.

But it is now four centuries and a-half since printing was invented. Books have not only been rendered accessible, but they have in our days become so cheap that it certainly entails less expense of money and time to buy a book and read it than to attend a course of lectures. We are told, therefore, that the time for oral teaching has gone by, and that we are fighting against the spirit of the age in trying to maintain, and even to extend, the antiquated system of imparting instruction by means of public lectures. This sounds very plausible, nay, I am willing to admit, it contains some truth, but not, as we shall see, the whole truth.

First of all, it is quite clear that the system of oral instruction will always remain the only possible system with boys and girls at school. Try to imagine what schools would be with books only, and without masters! We need not dwell on this point. Everybody admits it. But it may be useful to remember that, during that early stage at all events, the personal element, the human influence of the teacher is altogether indispensable. The question with which

we have to deal is whether that human influence is, if not indispensable, at all events useful at a later stage also, or whether a system which has proved itself useful at school becomes, for some reason or other, really hurtful at the Universities, and if at the Universities, then all the more so in our attempt at extending the benefits of University teaching to larger classes, who of necessity remain debarred from some very important advantages of our academic life. That lectures have their drawbacks who would deny?

First of all, most lectures are too long. A whole hour is very long, even for a sermon, which we may follow with our eyes closed; it is certainly too long for a lecture that requires us to be wide awake from beginning to end. It is generally the last quarter of an hour that does all the mischief, that makes us impatient, dissatisfied, angry—that often ruins the very best of lectures. I strongly recommend, therefore, the remedy which has been accepted in all German Universities, the so-called *Academic Quarter*. The German professor begins punctually at a quarter-past and ends punctually as the clock strikes. This gives the German students a quarter of an hour breathing time—I won't say, smoking time—between two lectures.

Secondly, our audiences are generally too large, or, I should rather say, they are too mixed. This is a very serious drawback, particularly from the lecturer's point of view. If we aim at one target we may possibly hit it; if we have to aim at two or three or four, we are almost sure to miss them all. Here also I speak feelingly. It might be supposed that, in a university which is protected by a matriculation examination, this difficulty did not exist. But it does exist. We have in Oxford the ablest and best-taught young men, who need not fear comparison with the first-class men of any other country. But we have also a very large number of students to whom real academic teaching can be of no use whatever. I shall give you one instance of what happened to me—not at Oxford, for one ought not to tell tales out of school—but at the Royal Institution in London. The audience there is certainly the most enlightened, the most brilliant, the most learned and critical audience one has to face anywhere in the world—but it is mixed. Years ago, when it was still necessary to prove that Hebrew was

not the primitive language of all mankind, I had devoted a whole lecture to showing the impossibility of this opinion. I explained how it arose, and I placed before my audience a complete genealogical tree of the Aryan and Semitic languages, where everybody could see with his own eyes the place which Hebrew really holds in the historical pedigree of human speech. After the lecture was over one of my audience came up to me to shake hands and thank me for having shown so clearly how all languages, including Sanskrit and English, were derived from Hebrew, the language spoken in Paradise by Adam and Eve.

Imagine my consternation! I well remember how I went to Faraday, who had listened to my lecture, and told him that after that it really was no use lecturing any more. He smiled, and with a twinkle in his dark eyes, he said: "You need not complain. I have been lecturing in this Institution for many years, and over and over again, after I have explained and shown before their very eyes how water consists of hydrogen and oxygen, some stately dowager will march up to me after the lecture and say in a confidential whisper, 'Now, Mr. Faraday, you don't really mean to say that this water here in your tumbler is nothing but hydrogen and oxygen?' Go on lecturing," he said, "something will always stick." I believe Faraday was right. Something will always stick, and light will sometimes spring from the very densest confusion of thought in which a pupil leaves the lecture-room. Still a large and mixed audience is a real evil, and I do not see why our Society should not devise some means of sifting and dividing audiences, instead of depending altogether on the all-powerful principle of natural selection, which, no doubt, will keep most people away from lectures that seem to them both useless and tedious.

It has been said that, when there is a really good book, it is better to read that book than to attend a course of lectures. This sounds very plausible, no doubt. The best book on any subject must contain more valuable and more trustworthy information than can possibly be claimed by each of the ninety-nine professors who lecture on the same subject. But supposing that there is such a best book—one of those mythical Hundred Best Books of which we have heard so much of late—that book may be a monument of industry, a

storehouse of learning, a perfect work of genius, but is it the best book, therefore, for the purposes of teaching? No man will become a painter by looking at a Raphael. No one will become a musician by listening to a symphony of Beethoven. And no one will become a philosopher by pondering over the pages of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. A young man may not want the same amount of guidance as a boy, but he wants help, advice, encouragement, and human sympathy, and these he can get from a man only, not from a book. It has been said that in reading a book we can sit and ponder silently over a difficult passage, we can turn back to a former chapter, and wait till the fog has lifted and the air has become clear again, while a professor has to talk on for ever and ever, without stopping. Now it is quite true, we cannot interrupt a professor and say: "Stop, stop, sir, I have not quite taken in your argument." But surely a professor who is worth his salt will himself pause occasionally, will go over the same ground again, because he feels, nay he sees, if he has eyes to see, from the bewildered looks of his pupils, that he has not treated the subject quite successfully. I remember professors who lectured on Metaphysics—for instance, Professor Weisse, at Leipzig, who paused very often, who seemed, indeed, to wrestle, like Jacob with the angel, till he found the right name and the right words for what he wished to say. It was often like an intellectual stammer and stutter, and yet that very stammer and stutter has left a deep impression on my mind of an honest thinker, of a real wrestler with truth.

It is by no means necessary that every lecturer should be an original genius, a great discoverer, or an eloquent orator. What is necessary is that he should be an honest man, a man who has acquired his knowledge by patient study, who has made it entirely his own, and who feels so perfectly at home in his own subject that he is willing to answer any reasonable questions that may be addressed to him, without being ashamed to say occasionally, "I don't know." That kind of lecturer does not simply teach facts; his object is to teach how to master the facts, how to arrange, how to digest, how to remember them. He knows his own struggles in acquiring knowledge, and he fights, as it were, his own battles over once more before the eyes of his pupils. If he has faith in what he

teaches, his voice appeals more powerfully to our imagination than a silent page. No italics, no signs of exclamation, can equal in impressiveness the natural emphasis of conviction that issues at times, like an electric current, from the voice of a teacher, or even of the most unimpassioned preacher.

We must not forget that there is room for preaching as well as for teaching lectures. When we want to stimulate interest before we convey information, we have to plead for our subject, we have to exhibit its charms, expound its usefulness, and show our pupils how they themselves may in time take their place in the noble army for the conquest of truth. No doubt a book also may sometimes kindle enthusiasm, but the shortest and safest way from the heart to the heart is, and always will be, the human voice.

Most of our own lectures here are no doubt meant to be teaching lectures. And with regard to them I quite agree with our critics that they ought to be based on a text-book. A teacher should either dictate the outlines of his lectures, or he must prepare a very full syllabus, giving what may be called by an ugly name the skeleton of his lectures, which by his oral teaching he has to endow with flesh, with muscles and nerves and life. Such a syllabus ought likewise to contain bibliographical notices, recommending certain books or portions of books for private study—nay, if it were not too invidious, giving warnings also against useless books. The time that is wasted by students in the country by reading useless, stupid, nay, mischievous books is incredible. I know it from numerous letters which I receive, and which I have often to answer by saying, "Try to forget all that you have read in that book."

But even if the compilers of a syllabus should be afraid of issuing such warnings, a new kind of an *Index expurgatorius* of really dangerous books, their recommendation of useful books would prevent many of the accidents which, we are told, happen to those who attend public lectures. With a syllabus in his hands no hearer need carry away wrong dates or misspelt names. The misfortune that happened to a student of metaphysics, who spelt the Universal I or Ego, *Eye*, is ludicrous, no doubt. But is it really so serious as it seems? Would there really be much difference between the Universal I or *Ego* and the Universal Eye or *Oculus?* Both are

metaphors, and it seems to me the Universal Eye or Percipient would convey much the same lesson as the Universal I or Ego, that is, the universal *person*, the *persona*, literally, the mask. Still, I quite admit we must not spell I, *eye ;* it is not even phonetic spelling.

I doubt whether those who profess an entire want of confidence in lectures are really aware of all the pains that are taken in order to ensure the efficiency of our lectures. Remember what our lecturers have to do. They have, first of all, to prepare a very elaborate syllabus. They have then to lecture a whole hour before a somewhat mixed audience. They have then to go over the same subject with those who remain for another hour, answer questions, and give advice for private reading. Before they give their next public lecture they have to examine essays and answers to questions sent in by their pupils, and again advise and direct them in their home work. At the end of each course, consisting of six, of twelve, sometimes of twenty such lectures, examiners are appointed to test the progress made by the pupils, and those only who have satisfied both the examiners and the lecturers have a right to receive a certificate. I really doubt whether our critics could be aware of all these safeguards which our delegacy has devised in order to make these University lectures really effective. I confess I do not see what fault even the most captious critic can find with them. Anyhow, if a book by itself could really do all that we try to do by means of lectures *and* books I doubt whether our lecturers would have been so thoroughly appreciated in the various provincial centres as they evidently have been hitherto. *Si argumentum quæris, circumspice!*

And as to our annual gatherings here at Oxford, though they have been called mere picnics, we know that they are more than that, and that they have borne good fruit. They are no doubt intended as a mixture of what is sweet and what is useful. A fortnight or a month spent at Oxford at the best time of the year is certainly delightful, and it is meant to be so. But I believe it is also a lesson, and it may be a very important lesson. The mere sight of our venerable and beautiful University, so full of historical memories, wherever you look, must leave on those who come to visit us an impression of reverence for what is old and of sympathy for what is young. Ruins are very eloquent, but Oxford is not all

ruins. You all know the story of the young American lady who was lost in admiration in the cloisters of Magdalen College. Suddenly a window was opened, and a young man looked out "O, my!" she exclaimed, "are these ruins inhabited?" Yes, they are inhabited; these old ruins of ours are full of young life. I remember many years ago another visitor at Oxford, Frederick William IV., the King of Prussia. He also was lost in admiration of our ruins. "Gentlemen," he said, when he left us, "Oxford is a wonderful place; everything old in it is young, everything young is old." In these few words you have the whole secret of the political and social life of England—reverence for the past, faith in the future. And here is a lesson which Oxford can teach and does teach without any lecturer and without any book.

But you must not expect that lectures can work miracles. It requires two people to make a lecture: one who is willing to teach and one who is anxious to learn. Lectures run off like water from a duck's back, or, as the Hindus say, like rain from a lotus leaf unless we are determined to drink them in; and not only to drink them in, but, in the true sense of the word, to masticate, to denticate, to chump, and to grind them, and then only to swallow them. It is not enough to be simply passive or receptive, while listening to a lecturer. We should be active ourselves, nay, even independent, and always try to combine the new knowledge which we receive with the old knowledge which we already possess. I do not mean to say that our attitude in listening to a lecturer should always be sceptical or captious. Far from it. But it should always be free and critical, and critical not so much with regard to facts as with regard to words.

There are many facts which we must all accept on trust. Life would be too short if everyone had to go step by step through the whole process by which the knowledge of certain events has reached us. There are few scholars, I believe, who could explain by what process of chronological calculation even so simple a fact as the date of the battle of Marathon has been established; still fewer who could tell how it has been proved that Buddha, the founder of the Buddhist religion, was preaching about the same time in India the doctrines of a new faith. Unless we feel ourselves specially interested

in any one of these questions, we must accept the answers on the authority of special students, just as many of us accept the Copernican system of the world and Newton's law of gravitation, without being able to defend either the one or the other against all gainsayers. It is not so much with regard to facts as with regard to words that we have to assert our independence. Words are the wings of our mind, but they often become the most dangerous snares.

When last year I had the pleasure of delivering before this meeting some lectures on the Science of Language,* my chief object was to warn you against the snares of words, and, at all events, to call your attention to the superlative importance of language in all the operations of our mind. If language and thought are inseparable, if they are but the two sides of one and the same process, it must be clear how much accuracy of thought depends on accuracy of language.

Now, I am glad to say, these lectures of mine were listened to as all lectures ought to be listened to, in an independent and a critical spirit. Some of my hearers found it hard to give up the usual terminology which distinguishes between language and thought, as we distinguish between body and soul. It required an effort with many to adopt the old Greek terminology, which has but one term, *Logos*, both for language and for thought. They did not see at once that worded thought or *Logos* is but the highest sphere of our mental life, and lays no claim on the lower strata, such as perception, emotion, intuition, calculation, which do not require the help of language, and which, therefore, we share in common with the dumb creation. But all of my correspondents—some of them quite as intelligent as my critics in the *Nineteenth Century* and the *Contemporary Review*—came to see in the end that what is called deliberate thought was altogether impossible or inconceivable without language.

As all lectures have, we may hope, to deal with deliberate thought, what I wish to impress once more on all my hearers is that they should themselves deliberate on the words in which information is conveyed to them. It is chiefly by taking so many

* *Three Lectures on the Science of Language.* Longmans, 1889.

words on trust that we find ourselves entangled in so many difficulties, so many contradictions, or, to use a Kantian phrase, so many antinomies of thought. Consider that the materials of our knowledge, the objects around us, have always been the same. Consider that the instruments of our knowledge, call them the senses, the understanding, the reason, or anything else, are likewise the same. How, then, can we account for the fact that every system of philosophy, from Thales to Kant, is contradicted by another system? It is chiefly, if not entirely, language that has thrown the apple of discord among us. We call the same thing by different names, and different things by the same name, and then we wonder that, as at the time of the Tower of Babel, so even now, we do not understand one another's speech.

But this is neither the time nor the place for a lecture on metaphysics. Nor is it so much from philosophical or technical terms that the evil of confused thought, or what is called intellectual fog, arises. Some of the most familiar terms are really causing the greatest mischief, terms which look so simple, so innocent, that it seems almost an impertinence to ask them what they are and what they mean. Take such a term as *heredity*. If a child has blue eyes and the father has blue eyes, of course, the child has inherited the father's blue eyes. If the child has brown eyes and the mother has brown eyes—again, the child has, of course, inherited the mother's brown eyes. And if the child has green eyes, and neither his father nor his mother was a green-eyed monster, nevertheless the eyes of the child are again inherited. Their green colour is due either to some obscure mixture of blue and brown, or to some atavismal influence, going back ever so far. Heredity, you see, is always right, it cannot possibly be wrong, whatever happens. Yet it requires but little reflection to see that heredity, as applied to peculiarities of body and mind, is one of the boldest of poetical metaphors which, as I said, form both the wings and the snares of that strange bird which we call our mind. What we want is a definition of heredity, when applied either to acquired or to non-acquired peculiarities of living beings. Those who had the advantage of listening to some thoughtful lectures on heredity, delivered here last year, will remember how difficult a subject heredity really is,

and how carefully it has to be defined and subdivided before it can be used for sound, scientific speculation.

Another word used at random, which seems to explain everything and really explains nothing, is *race*. If you ask what is meant by that word, you are generally told that race means blood, common blood. But we are told, not only in the Bible, but by Darwin also, that the whole human race is of the same blood, and we know that, if it were otherwise, such has been—in historic and pre-historic times—the mixture of blood by war, extirpation, captivity, and migration, that a race, or a family, or a single individual of unmixed blood, would in these latter days be an utter impossibility. What applies to blood, applies to bones, skull, hair, skin, and all that constitutes the outward character of an organic being. And yet this undefined word race is called in to explain almost anything. Historians will tell us that the Jews worshipped one God, because they belonged to the Semitic race, and the Semitic race has a monotheistic instinct. Politicians will tell us that the Irish and the Welsh hate union with England because they belong to the Celtic race, and Celtic blood, has an instinctive aversion to Saxon blood. All this is metaphor, nothing but metaphor. No chemist can distinguish between Semitic and Aryan, or between Celtic and Saxon blood. No physiologist can define what he means by an Aryan or Semitic skull, by Aryan or Semitic hair, by Aryan or Semitic coloured skin. What holds these so-called races together is not common blood, or common bone, or common hair, but the intellectual bond of a common language, of a common literature, or of a common religion; in fact, of common long-continued historical traditions. If race is once defined in that sense, lectures on racial peculiarities or similarities will become really useful, far more so than if the word is accepted as an undefinable something which nevertheless has to explain everything.

And what applies to race applies to *species* also. Darwin, as you know, has written a whole book on the *Origin of Species*, without ever giving, so far as I remember, any real definition of what is meant by that term. If I understand the drift of his argument rightly, what he has really proved in his *Origin of Species* is that in nature there is no room for species at all. Nature knows of indi-

viduals and of genera. Individuals, in order to be individuals, must differ from each other, however slight and imperceptible their differences may be. For our own purposes, we may call individuals which share certain more or less stable peculiarities in common, species. But no species has an independent existence in nature, apart from the genus to which it belongs. Species are entirely of our own making, they are names by which we comprehend and classify individuals belonging to the same genus, and sharing certain more or less variable peculiarities in common. If we once see this clearly, then we can enter into the true spirit of Darwin's speculations, and see how intimately they are connected with the oldest problems that have occupied the mind of man—how to name, that is, how to know, the endless variety of the phenomenal world.

Take whatever words you like, and you will find that they require to be examined from time to time. You remember how when we start on a railway journey there is a tapping noise all along the line of carriages. It arises from a man striking each wheel with an iron hammer, to see whether it is sound and has the right ring. That is what we ought to do with our words, at least with the more important ones, before we start on a course of reading, or while we are attending a course of lectures. We ought from time to time to tap our words with the iron hammer of the Science of Language, to see whether they have the right ring. How often of late, when listening to the wrangling about Home Rule, have I said to myself, "Oh, that someone, whoever he be, would tap that word, and give us a definition of what is meant and what is not meant by Home Rule. Nothing would be more useful for shortening the Sessions of Parliament. Or, when theologians are for ever disputing about inspiration, how much bad blood and bad language might be saved if some Bishop or Archbishop would give us an accurate definition of inspiration, so that we might know once for all what is comprehended by that name and what is not.

Though I have tried to defend lectures, and have endeavoured to show how even in these days, when the deluge of books seems to have set in, we cannot do without lectures, I must admit that there is with lectures, more particularly with eloquent lectures, this

great danger, that they produce too implicit a deference to authority. *Jurare in verbâ magistri*, to swear by the words of a professor, is a real danger, against which we must be on our guard. And the best safeguard is that which the Science of Language supplies in showing us the intimate connection between language and thought, and letting us see how words arise, how they change from generation to generation, how they grow old and corrupt, and have often to be discarded altogether. Words will govern us unless we govern them. This is perhaps the most valuable lesson which the Science of Language has taught us. It is not a new lesson, but it is a lesson which has to be inculcated again and again, on the teacher as well as on the learner. Most of those who, not without a considerable effort, have come to attend our lectures, are men and women who have thought for themselves, who have grappled with time-honoured watchwords, who have retained their faith in some, and have rejected others. I congratulate our lecturers on having such classes to teach, where they may reckon on a genuine desire to learn, and, at the same time, on a strong independence of thought in accepting instruction. And I doubt not that while teachers and learners are exploring together in this place the ruins of ancient thought, and the labyrinths of modern science, they will feel the silent influence of Oxford, and take to heart the lesson which our University has taught to so many generations of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen—respect for what is old, and the warmest sympathy for what is new and true.

F. MAX MÜLLER.

TWO VOICES.

IT was a Sunday evening, softening into summer night in one of the broadest and loveliest vales in England. The light that had streamed into the vale at early morning had played all day long upon the river in the midst, the beautifully curving old stone bridge that spanned it, the bordering meadows which were the very image of lowly peace ; and on the gently-aspiring slopes, with their nodding woods, that rose to irregular heights on either side. After seeking the lowest places, now the light was gathering itself up to stream out again—its coming and its going heeded little or not at all by the thousand human creatures who dwelt in the vale itself or in the new black town in the flats at the eastern end of it.

Even in England there are spaces of country which still seem unaccustomed to the eye and foot of man, and never yet to have been brought into his history. There are others in which field and wood are as much home as the hearth-place itself, and which, as you move about in them, seem to breathe a grateful acknowledgment of countless years of companionship and care. This is one of them. The feudal lord had a mind for other things besides fighting, and as good an eye for a fat pasture as for a rich heiress. So it befel that some parts of England were seized upon for tillage centuries before others; and this broad expanse between the gently swelling hills was dotted with barn and byre as soon as any in the kingdom. Every village and manor in the vale was a manor or a village, under the name it is known by now, in the time of the wars of the Roses ; and some of them long before. Twenty generations of husbandmen have passed with their wains and their cattle over this brown old bridge ; and where here and there a church tower rises above the deep meads may be found the tombs of

men who fought in France before the Maid of Orleans took to prophecy and the sword. The great lordships have perished, but there has been no cessation of homely drudging life from that day to this ; and though we may still read of the raidings on these lands to the left of us, and the ravagings of those others farther down the vale, where Sir John's tenants followed weeping and wailing after their cattle when the Earl's men trotted them off, *temp.* Edward IV., that is a long while ago ; and here about us is every sign of centuries of quiet husbandry, life undisturbed in its little round of birth, marriage, death, and burial—work a-field, the mark of which remains in the beauty that we see around us, and the joy and the mourning at home that were soon over and soon forgot.

As the dusk deepens in the valley flats, the breeze that so often stirs hither and thither uneasily at sundown, as if to detain the parting light, dies away, and the trees become quite still. Now a spark appears here and there in the windows of the clustering village houses, but not in many ; and all but one or two of these are extinguished again before the sky is well lit with stars. Peace is said to descend at such times and upon such places. But it is rather like an ascending than a descending peace that he is conscious of who stands upon the bridge or on either hill-slope and watches the coming on of night : the peace of sleep ascending. But to find this it is necessary to look up the valley, which is by far the greater part of it from the bridge ; and not over the rapidly broadening distance to where the new black town is built. There the scene is very different ; and it is the more sharply marked off because the whole town—small but closely packed—squats and huddles about the "works" established there little more than twenty years ago. From the bridge where we stand to the spot where a tall brick chimney rises into the air, the distance barely exceeds a mile ; but the town is so new that this one mile, with its coarsening water-meadows, completely cuts it off as yet from the valley at the mouth of which it gathers like a wen. Six good miles stretch the other way in unbroken view ; which is well, for it is only in this direction that the old order lingers in unmarred beauty and leisurely content. Look down toward the chimney stalk and the crowd of little houses, all of one hideous shape and colour, that stick about

it, and the yellow reek that covers that foul space stains the night. Turn your back to this huddle of well-fed fever and riotous filth, look to where that old square church-tower stands upon a gentle eminence halfway up the vale, and the clear deep blue of the dark greets the sight with a very different significance. Transport yourself in fancy to the tower top, regard the scene immediately around you, and it is poetry you read ; though a sad sort of poetry, like that of Gray's famous elegy. Stand upon the chimney top, look down, and there in sixty lines of squalid street you may have all the delights of a study by M. Zola translated into dull English, with no "fine point" about it of any description.

Here, too, in due time, the lights that gleam in the windows are extinguished, though here and there a kiln-fire throws up its glare of flame-illumined smoke, while lines of street-lamps shed a blear and blinking light upon the general squalor. Soon after midnight there is almost as much stillness in the little town as in the farms near the church tower, or even in the acre round about it which is always in repose. We have now lingered on the bridge so long that only one sound is to be heard—the soft swish of the stream as it strikes against the buttresses ; but as the night is a June night, and blazing with stars, a long stretch of the valley may be dimly seen, and above all, the chimney shaft thrusting up on the one side and the square church tower faintly visible on the other. These two very different Works of Man dominate the scene, and they alone seem to be awake, confronting each other, with all that naturally belongs to it gathered about either. If they could speak ! This is the thought that arises in the mind as the swish of the water and the silence of the fields deepen its broodings over the many changes which have passed under that small expanse of star-lit sky. If they could speak, as they seem to do the moment we think of it—and we could hear them speak !

How far a little fancy will go ! Looking up from the swirl of the stream, I turn to the chimney stalk and see above it a faintly luminous wreath, like that which proceeds from the kiln-fires but less distinct. It rises, settles again, darkens, and takes form. Squat upon the coping stone sits a huge figure, human in shape though

with wavering outline; the head of it more visible than the body's bulk, since it stands out more clearly against the sky. It looks this way over to the church. I turn my gaze in that direction and find what I expect to find. At first, however, I see only the iron crate which in the old days used to flare with alarm-fires when an enemy was at hand. But the prospect changes. First a flash like the kindling of alarm-fire; then a brief leaping up of the flame; and then in the place where the crate rusts on a corner of the tower is another figure; which for its brightness might have been clad in stuff torn from the silvery lining of the clouds. This shape stands erect, but not defiantly: with a drooping sadness rather.

From seeing to hearing. As if borne on a light wind passing high overhead, and descending to my ears like the noise of small birds flocking seaward, this is what passed between the shape on the chimney stalk and that on the church tower.

"——See from that poor old tumble-down pile of yours?"

"A past that has not gone for ever, as you are miserably delighted to believe."

"Gone for ever! The past you represent—with the oppression, the violence, the fraud, the superstition which filled the graves at your feet for a thousand years with the victims of lordly tyranny and priestly craft—there is an end of it."

"If it were so!"

"So it is, and therefore well may you sigh!"

"It is not so, for men remain. Every patch of red-green lichen on these walls might stand as a memento of some cruel fray, in which that farther or this nearer meadow was mulched in blood. No such deeds of rapine and revenge disturb the valley now; and perhaps—but the future is a long time in which darkness begins from to-morrow—never may again. So much may you rejoice at; but do so wisely. Rapine has other weapons than the sword—cruelty many means of torture; and little is gained if, while inflicting as much suffering as of old, they do their work more delicately, striking within and sparing themselves the reproachful sight of bleeding wounds and burning hearths."

"And where does this ingenious butchery go on? But do not trouble yourself: I know the answer. We strike within from the

factory and the counting-house, instead of from feudal murder-holes and the opium-dens that were called monastic cells. Is not that about it?"

"You asked me what I saw from this tumble-down old pile. What do you see around you from that reeking perch?"

"Honest reek, if sooty; reek of labour—labour that means bread for the belly, books for the brain, fire and light of every sort, kind, and description. No reek, I grant you, of ecclesiastical stink-pots."

"——What do you see around you (if you look for evil only), but the oppression, the fraud, the cruelty, the superstition of olden times in a different shape, or rather in a multiplicity of different shapes?"

"I see men better housed, better fed, better clothed, better taught, more safe in their homes and living longer in them. And that is enough for me."

"Enough, though even in the creation of these very benefits the oppression and fraud, the cruelty and superstition of the past continue—only in more evasive and degrading forms: the city-cheat in thousands for the moorland robber here and there."

"Poor world! But the worst of it is, I suppose, that it has lost its belief in religion. There is the secret of your groaning. That is the woe!"

"Is it lost?"

"Yes, if the question applies to what you call 'faith.' Believe me, friend, much of it is gone, and the rest is happily on the go."

"Poor world indeed, if that be so!"

"Yes, if it is bad to be rid of an imposture that darkens the intellect against the only light, which is truth ——"

"Light without warmth, in which nothing lives."

"—— And not only so, but wastes the precious hours (of which we have precious few), in fraudulent employments—squandering the energies of mind in pursuit of shadows and playing the fool with the hopes and affections of mankind."

At this there was a silence between these two; and then the wafting of a separate flaw of wind that streamed heavily overhead, down the vale seaward.

"Do you know what that was, poet?" said the voice from the chimney stalk. "It gathered just under you; and is now blowing about over the waste where millions of little fishes justify creation in devouring each other. It was a wind of sighs, rising from that ancient graveyard of yours when I said, 'Playing the fool with the hopes and affections of mankind.'"

Still there was no reply. Presently the same voice said in sterner tones, mockery absent from it at last—

"What a sight it was down there with you this morning, for the thousandth time and a thousand more to that! The day so beautiful—the softness of dawn lingering on till nearly noon, stillness so lovely, sunshine so sweet, these June winds with the hawthorn breath in them sweeping idly here and there—what a day! And how few such days there are in the wretched little lifetime of men. Looking abroad upon all this, what else did we see? Groups of people with their children moving heavily along a dozen different paths to that Vacuum you call a temple; dawdling through the churchyard as if the mere flesh and bones of them, informed by nature, knew of the wearying imposture and rebelled against it; passing into the black gullet of the Vacuum, there to be shut in with spirit-crushing gloom. Without and within—what a difference, great God!"

"Great God!" echoed from the church tower like the notes of a muffled trumpet.

"Hum, hum, hum! 'Ma-a' from one voice, 'Ba-a' from three hundred voices, 'ma-a' again and 'ba-a' again —— do I scoff? 'Tis not my meaning. I scoff no more than when I hear on work-a-days that old passing bell of yours solemnly going, once a minute, to scare non-existent air-devils out of the path of a soul which never ——," the rest caught and carried away by a kindly gust of wind. "I listen in this direction and in that. 'Toll!' goes the bell, and 'cheep' cries the sparrow, and 'wow-wow' the dog.' 'Toll!' again; and while the boom is trembling into silence what sounds are these that rise from below? 'Dust a-hoy!' 'Buy my pretty flowers —buy my blooming flowers!' 'Toll!' and 'Good heavens, ma'am, here's the fish hasn't come yet, and I do believe the chimney's a-fire!'—— Scoff? If you hear me well you don't hear scoffing."

"No; but the creeping of brutal thought amidst ashes of its own making."

"Listen, then, to the creeping of compassionate thought amongst ashes of another make. Everybody does not go to church on such blessed days as this has been. A worn old man wandered out from the town toward your place of worship, grateful for the loveliness of the morning, and thinking as he went of mornings like it when he was rather like it himself. When he came to that fringe of trees on the hill there that overtops the church mound, he sat down to rest; and, though he is an ignorant man, became much moved in mind as he looked about him: the nestling farms below, the sailing clouds above, the bee humming lustily by, the breeze that played amongst the grasses pretending to be a scythe. *You* know how the old gentleman felt, my friend; he was just as wistful, as heart-choked, as yearning and as soft as you could wish him to be when he withdrew his gaze from the ridge on the other side of the vale and rested it on the churchyard gate. At that moment—the bleating from the pulpit having come to an end—the organ opened its pipes, the people rose, and then once more the voice of abasement, supplication, trust, streamed out in a burst of psalmody. As it rose and fell, this old man said, his heart sinking into his poor old shoes, 'And what if there is nothing after all! There's thousands of churches all over the land; and at this very minute, in this same sunshine, thousands and thousands of people are sending up their prayers, and sobbing their hearts out over hymns like this. And suppose there's nothing! nobody above there to hear us or feel for us. All a mistake! Oh what a disappointment and a cruelty! And what a waste, what a waste!'—— Was this a creeping of brutal thought? And if it crept amongst ashes—as indeed it did—of what and by whom were those ashes made? You do not answer."

No answer came. Then, as if inspired by anger, the shape on the chimney stalk sprang up, and with arm extended went on to speak these verses:—

> "The breath of life, when it is time to pass,
> Risen from the parted lips a little way,
> Sinks and dissolves upon the new-made clay
> Like to white cloud-wisps trailing on the grass.

So with these breathings of a people's sighs :
In prayer, in sobbing song they seek the skies,—
Those far-off skies the firmament above,
Where in a heaven of Pity dwelleth Love.
Up in the nether air,
With trembling pinions soar
The sobbing song, the prayer—
A crow flight and no more !
The whither lost and all unknown,
Hither and thither they are blown,
Disparted by the winds ; and faint and fall
Where rise to equal heights the cow-boy's call,
The yelp of the dog and the roar of an alehouse madrigal."

To this challenging cry the response was not unready, but it was uttered with extreme gentleness :—

"Where the ear is, it hears.
And even though the voice of wrong-forced tears
Murmur its lamentations to the sod,
Yet do they rise to the breast of my most merciful God.
The heaven of Pity wherein dwelleth Love,
Seek it where His remotest planets roll,
Find it in full completeness bent above
The harbourage of the humblest human soul.
'Neath that low sky,
Its zenith but a handspace borne
Above the heart,
Compassion waits like Echo for the cry
Of hopes distraught or thoughts that nobly mourn ;
And soon the tears that from contrition start,
In distillations of sweet peace return."

"And that you believe," said the darker spirit, when the last words had died away. "No ; you believe that you believe, being nothing but belief."

"More than that, and yet Belief."

"Belief perishing, as that meek voice of yours, once so truculent, attests.

"If so, with it perish the noblest inspirations and the only solace of mankind."

"Even though it be nought but delusion and imposture."

"Even then ; and if Reason had not its own superstitions, this

it would acknowledge. Why, what is left in the world but delusion and illusion if there be no God, no Father in Heaven, nothing beyond the sights and sounds in which this painful life is passed? Who spoke but now of the beauty of the summer day? And what but the same voice spoke tenderly of the poor old solitary man who was so grateful for the beauty of the morning, and the softening of his heart as he looked about him? Now maybe all this itself is no better than illusion. As the old man wandered over the fields he thought of other mornings like to this: where are they? He thought of a time when he himself was like to such a morning: what has become of that himself? Yet if it be as I believe, something of what has been will exist for ever—even the beauty of a summer day, in what it whispered to many a mind and the response to it. But if not, then illusion and delusion altogether; and let us mourn the imposture, let us bewail the waste of emotion to which its vain speculations subject mankind. The old man's softening heart—a needless pain; his gentle memories—mere vapours, of no substantial good at all. But then, who teaches that it was or could be so? In what school of Reason is it taught that no comfort, nothing sustaining or exalting is or can be drawn from the dreaming of the mind on the unsubstantial shadows in which we live?"

A pause, and no reply.

"This is what Reason cannot teach, for it is contrary to the manifest truth of things by which alone it will be guided. Then why should Reason which denies to man more than this little life—why should it seek to destroy a comfort ten times more sustaining and ennobling, because it is a comfort that rests upon illusion too? Where all is but a vain show, and where the most of reality is pain and grief, what reason or what righteousness can there be in blasting the one deceit by which pain and grief are overcome?"

"Are overcome?"

"Yes, and more than that; by which the little life is sweetened and exalted while it lasts."

"Strange to hear the deceit acknowledged, though not to hear it championed as the best of blessings."

"Acknowledgment without knowledge is impossible, and there

is no earthly knowledge of these things. With unperfected vision, we grope for the truth in a world of shadows; and maybe the truth is best known by being in its fruits perfect good."

"Such fruits as your wars of religion; the venomous enmities of priest and priest; pious burnings at the stake; death-bed-haunting robbers, with their menace of hell; the imposture of saint-making, with its frauds and its lies."

None of these things are the fruit of Christian teaching or the Christian faith."

"Speak, then, of the fruits that are perfect good."

"This is a world in which everything is doomed to perish utterly."

"To dissolve into its original elements, these again combining and again renewing."

"But there was a time when no conscious life had arisen to be renewed; and there will be a time when life can no longer be sustained on this freezing planet. It will sink back, stage by stage, along the line of its advance, till it ceases to breathe in any moving thing; and long before then the whole race of man will have perished utterly. Body and spirit, all quite gone."

"All quite gone. As if they had never been."

"But not more completely perished than every individual man who dies to-day."

"So it is; and no great cause for grieving."

"Not when we think of the poor life it is for millions of creatures, generation after generation? Of all the men and women who now lie sleeping, or, too much awake, allow their sorrows to stare upon the darkness, how many pass their lives in one dull round of care! Brains bemused, hearts half numb, their days a mire-track made in the struggle for food. What natural joys do spring up in the mire, crushed in it before they have time to bloom. Dear ones suffering near them, dying before them, dead and lost. Affection hardly daring to speak, it sounds so much like mockery and out of place. Nothing but this in a world of beauty and plenty till the hour of 'happy release.' Yes, but not to the poor soul that steadfastly believes! Ah, the difference then! There, in your filthy town, is a room where two old people sat all through the evening till

it was quite dark. In a corner their scanty bed; the walls naked in every part; the floor bare to the least rag; nothing left besides the chairs they sat on and the broken table with its three books."

"Good books, of course; and the set complete. One a hymn-book, one a Common Prayer——"

"Supper would have beguiled the time, but the measured morsel had been eaten at mid-day, and what food remained was for to-morrow. 'I have no candle, my dear,' said the old woman, in her voice of sweet patience, when it was dark; and neither had spoken a word for a long time. The old man put forth his hand and placed it kindly on her shoulder as he answered, 'Why, what matters? We are one day nearer to the morning when we shall wake in brightness everlasting——' 'Where our boy is,' she said. 'Where our boy is,' said he; 'and hasn't the good God put a candle of that same light into our hearts—at least a candle?' At his cheery word she turned her head and kissed the hand upon her shoulder; and it was not so dark but he could see the smile on her grey face as she murmured, 'My God, my boy, and my dear old man, all in Heaven together!' See them now, these two, as they sleep. Is there any pain upon their faces? Any mark of repining? None. They believe; and for all their hopeless penury, and the sorrow irremediable in the little time before them, they live in their belief as in a citadel of peace."

"The boy they talk of was so much a son to them that he alone earned their bread. And it is well that these poor old people should go to their graves under the fell deceit that they will see him and be with him in a part-no-more paradise!"

"Deceit it may be to whosoever has in him the assurance of its deceitfulness, and not, as others have, the assurance of its truth. But yet 'if there be nothing,' nothing beyond this world for its inhabitants, why then Belief is the one deceit to cling to where all is vain and fleeting. Hereafter or no hereafter, it is well that these poor old people should be what they are because of their belief; for it is not only comfort inexpressible in this dark end of their days, it ennobles them as much as it sustains. The nobility is no deceit. Though the rose spring from the mire, it is the rose."

"And this is the perfect good——"

"Multiplied ten thousand times in as many homes where no other earthly good ever entered, or only to leave them cumbered with grieving memories after a mocking visit for a day. And not these dim homes alone, but many, many more which, fair as they seem, are secret places of distress. The difference to mankind of Belief and Unbelief! Here is a man born good, and striving all his life long to do well. Starting with high hopes and conscious strength, failure dogs him at every step. Fighting year after year against neglect, penury, misconception, contumely, he falls back along the straight path which he will not quit, though he sees prosperous dishonesty laughing at him from every crooked by-way that he passes. Hope fails, strength fails, age comes on; and what is it that he staggers backward to and knows must be very near? For him there is no belief: at the end of the path is the Pit! Terminus to all his endeavour is the edge of the pit: to faint on the edge and fall over is the cure of his wrongs and the solace of his disappointments. —— But how is it with such a man who believes undoubtingly? What is failure to him? What obscurity, poverty, maimed endeavour—what even though to these are added the incomparable suffering of calumny abroad, treachery at home, or the solitude that mocked affection makes? He has a Father in Heaven who sees and knows and takes account of all. As he fights on he feels that watchful Presence not far off; and whenever he is quite borne down it closes about him with immeasurable comfort. Should any dear ones of his go past him in this life, it is not to any dark engulfing pit they go, but to the eternal home where he will find them again. And when at last this outworn Failure but righteous and brave man is forced to the verge, there is no gloom for him: light opens, and it is as if he sank into the bosom of his all pitying Father. These are the tremendous blessings of Belief, and its most precious uses."

"Its figments."

"Yet at any rate they are as much realities, as substantial and effectual, as the downward drag of Unbelief. And so if the beginning and end of things for mankind lie in the compass of their earthly life, and if it be good that these poor multitudes should fare through it with the most of comfort and fortitude, should Kindness

take much pains to sap belief? Would Wisdom or Goodness do so, since it sustains labour at its noblest and nourishes every human virtue? It is not as if these blessings were exhausted in the individual: they live after him in the use he puts them to. Every one who makes a good fight of it contributes to the elevation of all mankind; and though he may be disappointed of his Heaven above —which yet I think he will not be—it is such as he who bring a more heavenly light into this world below."

"Your pardon, friend: the best fight is made by men who do not need to seek support from illusions, and are capable of facing the truth though it never present itself in any other shape than vanity passing into death."

"Truth in that shape would be questionable indeed! Nor does Belief seek support from illusions. Belief finds support, and more than support, where it sees no illusions."

"And yet it is perishing."

"Retiring, it may be; like the sap of the tree in time of winter."

"Do you say so? Come forward a little more, and say shrinking, shrivelling, dying."

"That would be a blasphemy against your only god, Truth Palpable. The vitality of Belief is not measurable by the number of believers now and yesterday. If all the fire on the earth but one small flame were extinguished, the whole earth might be illumined again from that small flame."

"But, by supposition, if the small flame go out? What when there are no more believers at all?"

"And no more men and women either? No new generation to be born with the kindling spark in any member of it? Yes, then."

"The same old kindling spark!"

"Even endowed, perhaps, with a keener light."

"What ho, there! Why, what an inveterate dreamer is religious superstition!"

"Dreaming even that Unbelief itself may draw on the greater triumphs of Christ on earth!"

"Which we may briefly describe as ——"

"The extension of charity, the diffusion of brotherly love, greed suppressed, luxury shameful, service and self-sacrifice a common

law. Yes! and why not? So it is already between mother and child."

"Friend," said the shape on the chimney shaft, after a brief silence, "I am Unbelief: so consider me: teach me at once to draw on these greater triumphs—which haven't been much advanced by Belief up to the present time—and I'll try my skill at the business gladly."

"Your business it is, unless you are indeed the merest enemy of mankind; and Reason should have taught you so. From that dry teacher Unbelief should have learned, long ago, that if it be but commonly wise and humane it also must do the work of the believer's God."

"And who or what is more on the side of wisdom and humanity? Teach away, for I see the moon, and it will soon be morning."

"It has been truly said, There is no wisdom without kindness; and he who makes havoc of the old sustaining creed, feeling compelled to do that dread work by what he knows of truth and duty, should fail in nothing that may repair the desolation he creates."

"Having destroyed one creed, or one system of imposture, he should proceed to glorify himself by inventing another."

"I only ask that he should go on to preach what follows from his own work of destruction. Suppose it accomplished, then surely this is what he should say to mankind: 'Believe that the old ideas of the scheme of the Creator were foolish, and how are your relations to each other changed! What was the vain fancy that governed the world so long? That this was a scene of probation. The mysteries of pain and suffering, the burdens apportioned to unequal strength, wickedness happy, goodness lingering in unregarded wretchedness—all this was explained by "a scene of probation." Here we were placed with every difference of advantage—difference not only of fortune, but of brain, mind, character. By far the greater number of us born to poverty absolute, and the endless degradations and temptations of poverty; born, too, with very different measures of light and strength to know the right way and keep from falling. But, what then? It was only for this life, with eternity beyond; and these were but varying methods and measures of probation. There

was an all-wise, ever kind Father above, to whom was known the several disabilities of each of us, the distress, and the endeavour to do well or to do the best. Account was taken in Heaven of everything; and there would be a future of redress that would leave no privation unreckoned, no weakness unconsidered, no wrong uncompensated that was meekly endured. So we used to say——'"

"Recording Angel invented, with a book, to carry out the idea in a convincing manner."

"'—— So we used to say who were fortunate and happy; and what balm it was to dwell upon the thought, and how sweetly it soothed the pain of gazing from our comfortable hearths upon the dark embruted lives of so many of our fellow creatures. And those others? So they also believed, or half-believed. It was their solace when some affliction more heavy than another fell upon them, and the thought of it gave them greater patience to endure their wrongs because of the accompanying whisper, "God will avenge." But if it be all a mistake, if probation is a deceit and there is no Divine scheme of redress beyond the grave, how do we stand to each other then? How do we stand to each other in a world empty of all promise beyond it? We have settled one awful question by dispossessing mankind of its mysterious Providence; what of the awful question that rises in its place? It was Cain who asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Who but Cain will ask the question now, or a worse than Cain? When he spoke, he believed he stood in the presence of God, the Keeper of the universe, in whose hand lay boundless compensation. There is no God. There is no compensation after death, and no repair. No longer can we sit in our comfortable homes and talk, self-soothingly, of the dispensation of suffering as proceeding from the same beneficent Wisdom which has appointed to ourselves the more searching trial of riches, ease, health, and all the graces of prosperity. There is no such mystery, either to support or restrain; and if we do not well to each other, what help, or hope, or consolation is there for the dim multitudes of our fellow creatures who are born to unmerited misery, and live and die in the same way?'—This" (so went on the tremulous voice from the church tower)—"this is what Unbelief should preach, in duty to mankind, from the ruins that encompass

it. For if there be no divine Fatherhood, then there must be more of human Brotherhood, or this is a place of beasts for every moving thing."

"That is to say, more of common humanity."

"More, and much more, on every side. Is there a duty of forbearance in a world of men reduced to the condition of the forest creatures, with a natural right to ravage for their own good in the only existence that is theirs? Then there is a duty of surrender also. Teach that: teach both duties; for to do so is the incumbent duty of Unbelief, unless it would bring upon earth the hell it denies. Preach patience to suffering still, resignation to penury, forbearance to famishing toil in a land of plenty, even though there be no hope of recompense but a conscious exaltation of soul till soul expires with consciousness at death. But, then, to others another lesson. If we must give up the Divine scheme of redress as a dream, does not redress become an obligation returned upon ourselves? All will be put right in another world. No! All must be put right in this world or nowhere and never. Unbelief is a call to bring upon earth the justice, the charity, the compassion, the suppression of self, the oneness of brotherhood that never can make a heaven for us elsewhere."

"Almost thou persuadest me to be a sentimentalist," said the shape on the chimney shaft. "And behold, how much better thou reasonest, how much more companionable thou becomest, when thou art drawn away a little from the airy mazes of thy superstition. But, friend, what hope hast thou, as a practical spirit—for, truly, somewhat of the practical is now shown in thee—what hope, I say, of a little heaven below, the other being given up as a thing of romance?"

"Even Mockery itself should discern that there is a great stir in the minds of men all through Christendom; an uneasiness which, though it began to move only a little while since, heaves with fast-gathering forces. And if it had a voice, which someone may arise ere long to give to it, it would speak as I have spoken to Unbelief. And oh, dear Lord, that such an one may soon arise!"

"What!—to supersede your Heaven and your Deity? Why, if this new Prophet, with his voice of the spiritual earthquake now heaving in so many quarters, should bring upon earth the celestial

justice, the compassion, the oneness of brotherhood, which—but I proceed no further—what will become of ——"

"Thus, as I have said, Unbelief itself may turn to the service of Heaven and do the work of the believer's God."

"Nay, friend; what you say is that man will turn to the service of man, through a widening sense of benevolence, being hopeless of the help of the believer's God."

"No, but the hopelessness may be the help. That should be no strange thing in the growth of man's spiritual nature. Suffering purifies and advances it; and if, rising against the bar which Thought has heaped against it, it pours above that barren reef in search of the wastes that penury and oppression make, what matters how bitter the wind that drives it on, or whether it be called hopelessness or unbelief? Thus will Heaven's work on earth be done, and not that only; for in the doing of it the spiritual nature of man will be exalted more and more. Christ was our Brother that we might all be brethren, and seek the perfection of humanity in mind and soul by self-sacrificing brotherhood. Do thou thy work not in part but in all. Preach as I have said, and as it is the duty of Unbelief to preach, even according to the wisdom of Selfishness; succeed to the utmost, and if rapine is withheld from rising out of the haunts of poverty that will be the least consequence. Redress in *this* world—every abandonment of self-sacrifice to that end; and then not only will the hungry be fed and the naked clothed, but the whole spirit of man will be uplifted and expanded to receive more of the spirit of God. Its illuminations are but feeble yet: broader they'll be as men deserve of Him. The chamber of the soul is but a narrow space, and therefore dim. Lift high the walls and make the casements bright: He will provide the light."

"Rhymester, I add another rhyme, and say, 'Good-night.' And, rhapsodist, it may be 'Good-night' again and again for a little while; but, believe me, the time cometh, and that quickly, when for you there will be no to-morrow."

"Then shall I perish; but 'twill not be so."

"Faintly said."

"Faintly said, maybe. This is the fainting moment of the day—the moment between night and morning when the breath of the

universe seems to be drawn out. For a while it is as if the heart of the world stood still; and then, on comes a sweep of wind like a freshet, the heart beats again, the dawn lifts again, and there is another burst of day."

"The observation is familiar to every night prowler."

"Apply it to my hopes. From darkness and arrest I feel the first breath of the freshet, and see the first ray of a dawn that shall be more full than the last. And yet the fear ——"

"The fear? Come, cheer me with the fear before we part."

There was no answer to this in words. But the arm of the spirit on the church tower was extended to that part of the heavens where the sun would rise presently, and it was as if he was able to depict upon the clouds the substance of his thought. A vast battle-piece was spread across the sky, where countless battalions dashed against each other in swiftly shifting stretches from horizon to zenith—shadows, but terrible. As they faded, or rather as the whole moving field swept beyond sight, the echo of a moaning cry, in which many different sounds of lamentation blent, passed overhead; and "That," said the trembling voice, "that may be the precursor and the occasion."

"Go thou, then," replied the darker Spirit, "go thou and dream sweet dreams of rising anew from the reek of an Armageddon soon to be! Farewell, friend: it is Monday morning."

A plash in the stream—the plunge of a rat, perhaps. Silence, and then the crack of a waggoner's whip in the distance. The grinding noise of the waggoner's wheels, a trolling song from the waggoner's throat, a break in the sky, the first chirp of the birds, and I take my way from the bridge where these things were seen and heard.

FREDERICK GREENWOOD

A RADICAL PROGRAMME.

PART II.

IN the new development of early Christian and of Socialist doctrine, England and her Colonies take the lead, and stand for the moment in advance even of the United States. No doubt there are portions of America more forward in these matters than Great Britain, but no one who knows the two countries well is likely to dispute the truth of the general statement. It is the Old World, in Great Britain and Germany, that has taken the lead in the new thought, and Germany and the British Colonies are the leaders in that State Socialism which represents at the present time its most active development.

The German official Socialists are Socialists because they hold in common with the Revolutionary Socialists that it is desirable to produce a nearer approach to equality of social conditions, and desire to bring about by law this increased equality. They hold that in the division of wealth the workers should obtain a larger share, and that that result will never come about if men wait for it to be won by the mere effect of free bargain. It can only be produced, they think, by the action of collective man through the laws of the State. The old economists in their time held that the best way to make men happy was to leave them alone, and that competition, unrestricted by State action, or by custom, would give to each man the place that suited him. We can all remember the time in our youth when the doctrine of *laissez faire* seemed to comprise the whole of orthodox economy; but now it reads like ancient history, and sounds as a dead doctrine in our ears. Even if all men were perfect, mere unrestricted liberty of competition would not suffice to

produce a perfection of social order. But, as men individually and in classes are often selfish, the state of things is worse. The triumph of the strongest is by no means in all cases that which is most to be desired, and the result of trying for a time the principle of almost unrestricted competition has been to bring about a general desire for the organisation, in the interest of the weak, of the whole force of the State. The rapid development of manufactures in recent years has been accompanied by an extraordinary increase of wealth in certain hands, but also by the growth of a great body of unskilled labour, and by an apparent increase of misery, although, for reasons to be given later on, it seems unlikely that the process will long continue. The German official philosophers have brought themselves to the point of declaring that it is the business of the State to cause rich and poor to participate in the profit of increased production by the systematic education of the people, and by a better distribution of the income of society. They wish gradually to nationalise or municipalise so much of the land, capital, and manufactures of each country as can be efficiently managed by the public, including all undertakings which tend to become monopolies, and those which, being best conducted on a large scale, are already managed rather by companies than by individuals. They argue that Government could undertake banking and insurance with as much success as posts and telegraphs, or, in our Colonies, railways. The additional advantage which these Germans see in taking quasi-public works into public hands is that it will be possible to benefit the workers in such matters as gas and water supply, tramways, railways, and so forth; and the workers have been so benefited in the British Colonies. The Germans desire also to employ taxation to gradually mitigate the inequalities of wealth. It is impossible to understand the recent action of the young German Emperor unless we bear in mind our knowledge of how far matters have already gone in Germany, under Governmental direction, towards State Socialism. The main difference between German and British Socialism is that, while German Socialism is professorial, or in other words a Socialism of theory British Socialism, so far as it has hitherto been at all successful in the mother country, and in the form of State Socialism in the Aus-

tralian Colonies, is empirical, and deals, without any theory, with the facts of life as they present themselves. The English people know no rule but rule of thumb.

We are at present in a transition stage. There are, happily, few people in Great Britain who are sufficiently inexperienced to imagine that an ideal condition of society could at once and without danger be brought into existence by legislative means. On the other hand, there are a large number who are inclined to act upon the principle that society should take of the realised riches of those who benefit by the advantages of civilisation such a share as the best of the wealthy class already give of their own accord for the benefit of the victims of our social system. The tendency towards graduated taxation and the tendency towards increase of State action are both marked. Formerly the State was looked upon by the masses of the people in the light of an aristocratic or of an autocratic abstraction, whereas now it daily comes to be more and more looked upon by the people as a synonym for themselves. It is flattering to the Imperial Parliament and to Australasian Parliaments, as contrasted with Congress and the State Legislatures of the United States, that the old dislike of State intervention should be fast disappearing in Great Britain and in our most flourishing Colonies, while still strong on the other side of the Atlantic. In this country political reforms have undoubtedly led to a remarkable change in the popular way of looking at the actions and the functions of the State. The very phrase "paternal legislation" has become inapplicable to the State Socialism of Great Britain and her Colonies, for a democratic people now look upon the State not so much in the light of a father as in that of a servant of their will. It is possible to believe that we are moving steadily towards a more socialistic state of society without on that account holding Socialist opinions. It is possible to see that the whole drift of modern change is in the Socialist direction, without helping on the steps which would have to be yet taken to bring about a social revolution. The practical politician is concerned with the matter, because it is his duty to make the change as little harmful and as greatly beneficial as may be, both to the individual and to the State.

The Government has in recent times partly undertaken public education, and has made elementary education compulsory. It has increased the amount of its interference with the public health, with adulteration of food and other goods, with mines, with factories and workshops, and with workmen's compensation for injuries. It has acquired the telegraphs, and added to the letter post the parcel post and the Post Office Savings Banks and Government Annuity system. Municipalities have also repeatedly increased the amount of their public action as regards parks, museums and picture-galleries, libraries, baths and washhouses, gasworks, waterworks, tramways, markets, technical schools, and artisans' and labourers' dwellings. It is impossible with truth to hold that interference with private enterprise, so far as it has yet gone, has led either to hardship to individuals or to failure and loss to the municipalities and the State. If we compare the condition of society in Australia and in the United Kingdom with that which existed in these communities at the time when we first remember them, we must recognise that the decrease of crime, the decrease of extreme poverty in relation to the numbers of the population, the improvement in public education and in public health, are evidences of the success of the new principles so far as they have hitherto been in a limited degree applied to the social life of the British Empire.

The strong old-fashioned individualists, such as Mr. Bradlaugh, seem almost to forget that in England we have never made trial of pure individualism. After the suppression of the monastic houses (whose business was the protection of the weak, partly by receiving many of them into powerful communities which gave them shelter, partly by the bestowal of alms and of other help to the poor), England adopted a poor law such as no other country has ever seen. We have still in existence a poor-law system employing enormous numbers of people, and supporting numbers yet more vast, spending fabulous sums of money raised from all but paupers —a system which distinctly tends to discourage providence, to undermine the sense both of parental and of filial, indeed of family responsibility, and to weaken self-respect. The law puts foresight at a disadvantage by placing the improvident in as good a position as the provident, who, in addition to their subscriptions to friendly

societies or trade unions or clubs, have to pay rates for the support of their improvident neighbours. So much is true of the very theory of the law. The practice of Boards of Guardians in giving outdoor relief to persons who work lowers wages, and particularly the wages of the least-skilled kinds of employment, enabling recipients to take work for a lesser rate of wage than would otherwise prevail, and forcing down the wages of all persons. It has been said that in the matter of outdoor relief kindness to the individual is cruelty to the class. There are some who think that those who use such language with regard to outdoor relief are indifferent to the sufferings of the poor. As a fact, they conscientiously believe that their view is the better for the poor. Most of those who object to indiscriminate outdoor relief are favourable to the enforcement of the law on the side of the poor in at least one matter in which their opponents are more hard. A special Act was passed in 1847 to prevent the tearing asunder of family ties by the separation in workhouses, without adequate reason, of old married people. Guardians are bound to provide common accommodation for married couples over sixty years of age, and they may provide it for couples one of whom is over sixty years of age or not able-bodied. Hardly any Boards of Guardians act sufficiently on this provision to be able to supply such accommodation to all who ask for it, and a great many Boards of Guardians do not act upon it in any way. On the other hand, those who recommend recourse to indiscriminate or even to wide outdoor relief should read the history of the terrible period which was put an end to by the passing of the new poor law. In those days, as the German historian of our poor law has shown, the labouring classes of England had become convinced that the receipt of help from the rates carried with it no discredit. Every inducement to make provision for the future was destroyed, and the law formed a direct incentive to recklessness, and demoralised almost the whole population of the country. The second reading of the Bill to put an end to this disastrous state of things was carried in a House of 320 members against a minority of only 20—carried by the full concurrence of both parties in the State. It is only lately, since the horrors of the period have become forgotten, through the death of

the generation that lived through them, that there has been any proposal to revert to general outdoor relief.

That proposal is not the only mistaken suggestion made by some who think themselves individualists. Mr. Bradlaugh is far too greatly skilled in history and in economic science to support either of the views which are under our consideration; there are, however, in the ranks of the Liberal party many who favour not only outdoor relief, but also the dangerous "remedy" of a system of emigration at the expense of the whole people. Some of them, like Lord Compton, get over the difficulty that the Colonies, as well as the United States, refuse to receive our paupers, by maintaining that there should be sent out at the public cost, not paupers, but those who are on the brink of pauperism. That proposal would lead to the whole of the voluntary emigration of the country ceasing: for who would pay for himself and his family to go out when he could get the State to make the payment for him? The enormous emigration expenditure now met by voluntary means would come to be borne out of taxes. It is sufficient to reply to Lord Compton and those who, like him, support State emigration without having given sufficient attention to the subject, that nothing can be wilder than the belief that the working classes of England would consent to pay the cost of such a system out of taxes, even supposing that the Colonies would receive the persons so sent. Lord Compton has told committees and commissions that the emigrants sent out could be forced ultimately to refund the cost of their passages to the Government that sent them, and he imagines that there would be but little difficulty in collecting the money, forgetting, as he does, that the Colonies themselves absolutely refuse to become agents for any such collection.

The most encouraging fact that remains in the mind after the consideration of these various suggestions is that there has been a remarkable revival of interest on the part of the whole community as to the causes of that amount of human misery which still exists, and as to the best means of remedy. Rather than make the population generally the recipients of State charity, to the destruction of their independence, rather than ship them off to foreign lands, let us make them in all things of local interest their own masters

in their various localities. To every city, town, district, parish, as well as to every county, power might be given by a free vote of its inhabitants to do, with complete publicity, everything that would not harm its neighbours or cause it to draw bills upon futurity, and that is consistent with the unity of the country as a State. Those cities which, by means of local Acts, have in the past obtained from Parliament the largest powers, and have done the most for themselves of any in the three kingdoms, are the most prosperous parts of the whole country. Birmingham and Glasgow and others, possessed of a highly developed and vigorous municipal life, are the most advanced portions of Britain. London, which has been less trusted by Parliament than have been the provincial towns, has until lately been far less forward in almost all those institutions which make life for the poor worth living.

The principle that each community should be locally ruled by its best intelligence for the benefit of its members is one which is acted on as yet in the United Kingdom only as regards the cities and the counties and a portion of the smaller towns. The parishes have not yet been trusted by Parliament with power to deal adequately with their own affairs. One of the results is that some of the cities are becoming more healthy than are the most sparsely-peopled rural districts, though life in a densely crowded city cannot in the nature of things be supposed to be that life to which the idea of healthiness is attached. Good administration enables communities to struggle against the most unfavourable conditions. Not only are the housing of the people, and the provision of baths and washhouses for them, more and more in view as days go by, but public libraries are spreading fast in all the towns. It is easy, of course, to say that villages do not need parks, and can hardly afford picture-galleries and libraries; but there are libraries of more than one description, and cheap libraries can usefully be formed even for the smallest hamlets. In the great provincial cities, too, efficient local government prevents waste of endowments, whereas in London enormous sums have in the past been diverted from the purposes for which they were intended by their donors, and in the rural districts charities are very generally misused, owing to absence of effective control.

The rural parishes of England are governed by an assembly of the whole people called the Vestry, but these Vestries had, in early times, in addition to the powers which they possess at present, a good many other powers that have been lost. For example, while there have been controversies of late as to whether the control of the police throughout England should be in the hands of the elected representatives of the people, as in the cities ; or in the hands of nominated magistrates, as in the counties ; or of the Crown, as in the Metropolis, formerly such police as existed were the parish constables, elected by the parish from time immemorial. The parish formerly administered the poor law, which has been given to a larger district, and is controlled by a Board in the election of which there is the plural vote, and no secret ballot, and which contains a large *ex-officio* element. Up to well into the present century it was doubtful whether a parish Vestry must have the incumbent for its chairman, but an Act of 1818 recognised this ecclesiastical right, and the incumbent (or curate), if present, takes the chair by law. The same Act gave a plural vote to the large ratepayers in order to increase the influence of property, already far too great, in parochial affairs. Thus have been diminished, in purely local matters, the rights of the community at large. At every poll which takes place upon disputed questions referred to the parish by the Vestry meeting, inhabitants assessed over £50 have an extra vote for every additional £25 value, up to six votes. Nothing can be brought before the Vestry without the Vestry is duly summoned by notice. The notice must be signed by the incumbent, curate, churchwarden, or overseer, and, as a private parishioner cannot give a valid notice, the parish is entirely in the hands of the officials. It is essential that we should have parochial reform ; that the parishioners in Vestry should be allowed to elect their own chairman ; that they should be permitted to fix the hour for Vestry meetings, so as to choose a time when the majority of them may be able to attend ; that the plural vote should be abolished, and the old principle of one man one vote in parish matters be revived ; and that, in general, steps should be taken to endow the parishes with a real local life. Mr. Cobb's excellent Bill is one of those which meet with the strongest support throughout the rural dis-

tricts, and it would, in addition to these reforms, also create a kind of standing committee of the Vestry, would incorporate the Vestry, and allow the community to receive donations through it without the creation in each case of a body of trustees. The Local Government Bill of Mr. Ritchie unfortunately began at the wrong end, by not first creating those small local bodies of which the County Council should have been the crown. But even before the District Councils portion of the Bill was dropped the parish was not reformed by it, and no measure of rural local government will be satisfactory to the rural population of which parochial reform is not a leading feature.

The failure of the existing Allotments Act as regards the direct influence of the measure must be admitted, and the Liberal party are now pledged to entrust the administration of allotments to bodies acting for smaller areas than Boards of Guardians. The reasons which have been given for this view are not good ones although the view itself is tenable. It is not of the essence of Boards of Guardians that they should be chosen by the present system of election, and the majority of the House of Commons are pledged to alter that system, in such a way that each voter will have but a single vote, which will be exercised under the protection of the ballot. Even, however, as against reformed Boards of Guardians parish Vestries should exercise allotment powers. The compensation clauses of the present Act are costly and unworkable—one of the main reasons for its failure; and power to take land cheaply, which should be conferred upon all local authorities, would be specially valuable to the rural parishes on account of this question of allotments. In addition to the right to elect its own chairman, the parish should be given power to elect outright churchwardens and overseers, instead of which at the present time it elects one churchwarden, and presents for choice by the magistrates candidates for the office of overseer who need not be, and are not always chosen. The greatest importance of parochial election of churchwardens and overseers concerns the charities which are often entrusted to their care. But the parish Vestry should manage all parish property and parish charities, and should receive concurrent powers with the District, not only as to allotments, but as to footpaths and village greens.

Power of providing lodging-houses for the labouring classes the parish already possesses, but in the present state of the law those powers cannot be exercised.

The *Spectator* has recently criticised some remarks of mine at Glasgow, and has argued that there is no reason to expect that municipalities would go right where States go wrong, that the sovereign cities themselves failed in the middle ages, that it is impossible to count upon the existence of Medicis in the communities, and that the result of the steps proposed might be that we should find we had made crude experiments carried out by incompetent men. The answer is that in many matters municipalities may be expected to go right even where States go wrong, because in the smaller area there is direct and immediate responsibility to a ratepaying electorate. The sovereign cities failed rather because they were independent powers than because of any defects in their local administration. Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, could not be conquered unless Great Britain were destroyed, and that is an answer to the argument drawn from the failure of the sovereign cities. When the *Spectator* asks whether the municipal life of the future is likely to be pure and wise and benevolent, we may reply that it is pretty certain to be pure and benevolent as human institutions go, and that we hope that it will be wise, feeling sure, however, that it is as likely to be wise as is wisdom to be secured at present. Is it not better, even if there be the risk that communities will go wrong, that they should go wrong for themselves, making mistakes which they will learn to correct, than that people in their localities should be kept straight by the constant supervision of Government departments? The old view which used to be taken by men like Professor Fawcett, that public management is in all matters likely to be inferior to private management, is dead and gone. The gradual substitution of joint-stock enterprise, which has the faults of public management such as they are, for purely private enterprise has killed that view. Railways, tramways, gas companies, water companies, breweries, saltworks—most of the largest forms of manufacturing enterprise—where they have not fallen into the hands of the State or of the town, have been taken over by great trusts which are equally non-

personal. Town management ought not to be inferior to management by a trust. It seems certain that we shall gradually, very slowly perhaps, adopt the principle of municipalising so much land, capital, and industry as it is found can be well-managed as public property, beginning with those branches of industry which possess monopolies or which come to Parliament for powers.

To pay for those things which have to be bought from individuals, for the municipality or for the State, money may be needed; more, perhaps, than is needed at present, and it cannot be expected that on the whole taxation is likely to decrease. Payment for the good things we want will be of two kinds, as the things themselves are of two kinds; municipal payment for things municipal, and State payment for things national. As regards municipal payment it will be necessary to divide the rate between the owner and the occupier; but there remains behind the larger question whether the rates should not be graduated or progressive, as they are in Paris under a law of the Second Empire, so that the largest payers pay on the highest scale.

CHARLES W. DILKE.

(To be continued.)

THE WORLD'S DESIRE

By H. RIDER HAGGARD and ANDREW LANG.

Helenam vero immortalem fuisse indicat tempus.—Servius. Æneid II., 501.

BOOK II.

Chapter III.

THE BATHS OF BRONZE.

EVEN out of this night of dread the morning rose, and with it came Rei, bearing a message from the King. But he did not find the Wanderer in his chamber. The Palace eunuchs said that he had risen and had asked for Kurri, the Captain of the Sidonians, who was now the Queen's Jeweller. Thither Rei went, for Kurri was lodged with the servants in a court of the Royal House, and as the old man came he heard the sound of hammers beating on metal. There, in the shadow which the Palace wall cast into a little court, there was the Wanderer; no longer in his golden mail, but with bare arms, and dressed in such a light smock as the workmen of Khem were wont to wear.

The Wanderer was bending over a small brazier, whence a flame and a light blue smoke arose and melted into the morning light. In his hand he held a small hammer, and he had a little anvil by him, on which lay one of the golden shoulder-plates of his armour. The other pieces were heaped beside the brazier. Kurri, the Sidonian, stood beside him, with graving tools in his hands.

"Hail to thee, Eperitus," cried Rei, calling him by the name he had chosen to give himself. "What makest thou here with fire and anvil?"

"I am but furbishing up my armour," said the Wanderer, smiling. "It has more than one dint from the fight in the hall;" and he pointed to his shield, which was deeply scarred across the blazon of the White Bull, the cognisance of dead Paris, Priam's son. "Sidonian, blow up the fire."

Kurri crouched on his hams and blew the blaze to a white heat with a pair of leathern bellows, while the Wanderer fitted the plates and hammered at them on the anvil, making the jointures smooth and strong, talking meanwhile with Rei.

"Strange work for a prince, as thou must be in Alybas, whence thou comest," quoth Rei, leaning on his long rod of cedar, tipped with an apple of bluestone. "In our country chiefs do not labour with their hands."

"Different lands, different ways," answered Eperitus. "In my country men wed not their sisters as your kings do, though, indeed, it comes into my mind that once I met such brides in my wanderings in the isle of the King of the Winds."

For the thought of the Æolian isle, where King Æolus gave him all the winds in a bag, came into his memory.

"My hands can serve me in every need," he went on. "Mowing the deep green grass in spring, or driving oxen, or cutting a clean furrow with the plough in heavy soil, or building houses and ships, or doing smith's work with gold and bronze and grey iron--they are all one to me."

"Or the work of war," said Rei. "For there I have seen thee labour. Now, listen, thou Wanderer, the King Meneptah and the Queen Meriamun send me to thee with this scroll of their will," and he drew forth a roll of papyrus, bound with golden threads, and held it on his forehead, bowing, as if he prayed.

"What is that roll of thine?" said the Wanderer, who was hammering at the bronze spear-point, that stood fast in his helm.

Rei undid the golden threads and opened the scroll, which he gave into the Wanderer's hand.

"Gods! What have we here?" said the Wanderer. "Here are pictures, tiny and cunningly drawn, serpents in red, and little figures of men sitting or standing, axes and snakes and birds and beetles! My father, what tokens are these?" and he gave the scroll back to Rei.

"The King has made his Chief Scribe write to thee, naming thee Captain of the Legion of Pasht, the Guard of the Royal House, for last night the Captain was slain. He gives thee a high title, and he promises thee houses, lands, and a city of the South to furnish thee with wine, and a city of the North to furnish thee with corn, if thou wilt be his servant."

"Never have I served any man," said the Wanderer, flushing red, "though I went near to being sold and to knowing the day of slavery. The King does me too much honour."

"Thou wouldest fain begone from Khem?" asked the old man, eagerly.

"I would fain find her I came to seek, wherever she be," said the Wanderer. "Here or otherwhere."

"Then, what answer shall I carry to the King?"

"Time brings thought," said the Wanderer; "I would see the city if thou wilt guide me. Many cities have I seen, but none so great as this. As we walk I will consider my answer to your King."

He had been working at his helm as he spoke, for the rest of his armour was now mended. He had drawn out the sharp spear-head of bronze, and was balancing it in his hand and trying its edge.

"A good blade," he said; "better was never hammered. It went near to doing its work, Sidonian," and he turned to Kurri as he spoke. "Two things of thine I had: thy life and thy spear-point. Thy life I gave thee, thy spear-point thou didst lend me. Here, take it again," and he tossed the spear-head to the Queen's Jeweller.

"I thank thee, lord," answered the Sidonian, thrusting it in his girdle; but he muttered between his teeth, "The gifts of enemies are gifts of evil."

The Wanderer did on his mail, set the helmet on his head, and spoke to Rei. "Come forth, friend, and show me thy city."

But Rei was watching the smile on the face of the Sidonian, and he deemed it cruel and crafty and warlike, like the laugh of the Sardana of the sea. He said nought, but called a guard of soldiers, and with the Wanderer he passed the Palace gates and went out into the city.

The sight was strange, and it was not thus that the old man, who loved his land, would have had the Wanderer see it.

From all the wealthy houses, and from many of the poorer sort, rang the wail of the women mourners as they sang the dirges for the dead.

But in the meaner quarters many a hovel was marked with two smears of blood, one dashed on each pillar of the door; and the sound that came from these dwellings was the cry of mirth and festival. There were two peoples; one laughed, one lamented. And in and out of the houses marked with the splashes of blood women were ever going with empty hands, or coming with hands full of jewels, of gold, of silver rings, of cups, and purple stuffs. Empty they went out, laden they came in, dark men and women with keen black eyes and the features of birds of prey. They went, they came, they clamoured with delight among the mourning of the men and women of Khem, and none laid a hand on them, none refused them.

One tall fellow snatched at the staff of Rei.

"Lend me thy staff, old man," he said, sneering; "lend me thy jewelled staff for my journey. I do but borrow it; when Yakûb comes from the desert thou shalt have it again."

But the Wanderer turned on the fellow with such a glance that he fell back

"I have seen *thee* before," he said, and he laughed over his shoulder as he went; "I saw thee last night at the feast, and heard thy great bow sing. Thou art not of the folk of Khem. They are a gentle folk, and Yakûb wins favour in their sight."

"What passes now in this haunted land of thine, old man?" said the Wanderer, "for of all the sights that I have seen, this is the strangest. None lifts a hand to save his goods from the thief."

Rei, the priest, groaned aloud.

"Evil days have come upon Khem," he said. "The Apura spoil the people of Khem ere they fly into the Wilderness."

Even as he spoke there came a great lady weeping, for her husband was dead, and her son and her brother all were gone in the breath of the pestilence. She was of the Royal House, and richly decked with gold and jewels, and the slaves who fanned her, as she went to the Temple of Ptah to worship, wore gold chains upon their necks. Two women of the Apura saw her and ran to her crying:

"Lend to us those golden ornaments thou wearest."

Then, without a word, she took her gold bracelets and chains and rings, and let them all fall in a heap at her feet. The women of the Apura took them all and mocked her, crying:

"Where, now, is thy husband and thy son and thy brother, thou who art of Pharaoh's house? Now thou payest us for the labour of our hands and for the bricks that we made without straw, gathering leaves and rushes in the sun. Now thou payest for the stick in the hand of the overseers. Where now is thy husband and thy son and thy brother?" and they went still mocking and left the lady weeping.

But of all sights the Wanderer held this the strangest, and many such there were to see. At first he would have taken back the spoil and given it to those who wore it, but Rei the Priest prayed him to forbear, lest the curse should strike them also. So they pressed on through the tumult, ever seeing new spectacles of greed and death and sorrow. Here a mother wept over her babe, here a bride over her husband—that night the groom of her and of death. Here the fierce-faced Apura, clamouring like gulls, tore the silver trinkets from the

children of those of the baser sort or from the mummies of those who were laid out for burial, and here a water-carrier wailed over the carcass of the ass that won him his livelihood.

At length, passing through the crowd, they came to a temple that stood near to the Temple of the God Ptah. The pylons of this temple faced towards the houses of the city, but the inner courts were built against the walls of Tanis and looked out across the face of the water. Though not one of the largest temples, it was very strong and beautiful in its shape. It was built of the black stone of Syene, and all the polished face of the stone was graven with images of the Holy Hathor. Here she wore the cow's head, and here the face of a woman, but she always bore in her hands the lotus-headed staff and the holy token of life, and her neck was encircled with the collar of the gods.

"Here dwells that Strange Hathor to whom thou didst drink last night, Eperitus," said Rei the Priest. "It was a wild pledge to drink before the Queen, who swears that she brings these woes on Khem. Though, indeed, she is guiltless of this, with all the blood on her beautiful head. The Apura and their apostate sorcerer, whom we ourselves instructed, bring the plagues on us."

"Does the Hathor manifest herself this day?" asked the Wanderer.

"That we will ask of the priests, Eperitus. Follow thou me."

Now they passed down the avenue of sphinxes within the wall of brick, into the garden plot of the Goddess, and so on through the gates of the outer tower. A priest who watched there threw them wide at the sign that was given of Rei, the Master Builder, the beloved of Pharaoh, and they came to the outer court. Before the second tower they halted, and Rei showed the Wanderer that place upon the pylon roof where the Hathor was wont to stand and sing till the hearers' hearts were melted like wax. Here they knocked once more and were admitted to the Hall of Assembly where the priests were gathered, throwing dust upon their heads and mourning those among them who had died with the Firstborn. When they saw Rei, the instructed, the Prophet of Amen, and the Wanderer clad in golden armour who was with him, they ceased from their mourning, and an ancient priest of their number came forward and, greeting Rei, asked him of his errand. Then Rei took the Wanderer by the hand and made him known to the priest, and told him of those deeds that he had done, and how he had saved the life of Pharaoh and of those of the Royal House who sat at the feast with Pharaoh.

"But when will the Lady Hathor sing upon her tower top?" said Rei, "for the Stranger desires to see her and hear her?"

The temple priest bowed before the Wanderer, and answered gravely:

"On the third morn from now the Holy Hathor shows herself upon the temple's top," he said; "but thou, mighty lord, who art risen from the sea, hearken to my warning, and if, indeed, thou art no god, dare not to look upon her beauty. If thou dost look, then thy fate shall be as the fate of those who have looked before, and have loved and have died for the sake of the Hathor."

"No god am I," said the Wanderer, laughing, "yet, perchance, I shall dare to look, and dare to face whatever it be that guards her, if my heart bids me see her nearer."

"Then there shall be an end of thee and thy wanderings," said the priest. "Now follow me and I will show thee the men who last sought to win the Hathor."

He took him by the hand and led him through passages hewn in the walls till they came to a deep and gloomy cell, where the golden armour of the Wanderer shone like a lamp at eve. The cell was built against the city wall, and scarcely a thread of light came into the chink between roof and wall. All about the chamber were baths fashioned of bronze, and in the baths lay dusky shapes of dark-skinned men of Egypt. There they lay, and in the faint light their limbs were being anointed by some sad-faced attendants, as folk were anointed by merry girls in the shining baths of the Wanderer's home. When Rei and Eperitus came near, the sad-faced bathmen shrank away in shame as dogs shrink from their evil meal at night when a traveller goes past.

Marvelling at the strange sight, the bathers and the bathed, the Wanderer looked more closely and his stout heart sank within him. For all these were dead who lay in the baths of bronze, and it was not water that flowed about their limbs, but evil-smelling natron.

"Here lie those," said the priest, "who last strove to come near the Holy Hathor, and to pass into the shrine of the temple where night and day she sits and sings and weaves with her golden shuttle. Here they lie, the half of a score. One by one they rushed to embrace her, and one by one they were smitten down. Here they are being attired for the tomb, for we give them all rich burial."

"Truly," quoth the Wanderer, "I left the world of Light behind me when I looked on the blood-red sea, and sailed into the black gloom off Pharos. More evil sights have I seen in this haunted land than in all the cities where I have wandered, and on all the seas that I have sailed."

"Then be warned," said the priest, "for if thou dost follow where they went, and desire what they desired, thou, too, shalt lie in yonder bath, and be washed of yonder waters. For whatever be false, this is true, that he who seeks love ofttimes finds doom. But here he finds it most speedily."

The Wanderer looked again at the dead and at their ministers, and he shuddered till his harness rattled. He feared not the face of Death in war, or on the sea, but this was a new thing. Little he loved the sight of the brazen baths and those who lay there. The light of the sun and the breath of air seemed good to him, and he stepped quickly from the chamber while the priest smiled to himself. But when he reached the outer air, his heart came back to him and he began to ask again about the Hathor—where she dwelt, and what it was that slew her lovers.

"I will show thee," answered the priest, and brought him through the Hall of Assembly to a certain narrow way that led to a court. In the centre of the court stood the holy shrine of the Hathor. It was a great chamber, built of alabaster, lighted from the roof alone, and shut in with brazen doors, before which hung curtains of Tyrian web. From the roof of the shrine a stairway ran overhead to the roof of the temple and so to the inner pylon tower.

"Yonder, Stranger, the holy Goddess dwells within the Alabaster Shrine," said the priest. "By that staircase she passes to the temple roof and thence to the pylon top. There by the curtains, once in every day, we set food, and it is drawn into the sanctuary, how, we know not, for none of us have set foot there—nor seen the Hathor face to face. Now, when the Goddess has stood upon the pylon and sung to the multitude below, she passes back to the shrine. Then the brazen outer doors of the temple court are thrown wide and the doomed rush on madly, one by one, towards the drawn curtains. But before

they pass the curtains they are thrust back, yet they strive to pass. Then we hear a sound of the clashing of weapons and the men fall dead without a word while the song of the Hathor swells from within."

"And who are her swordsmen?" said the Wanderer.

"That we know not, Stranger; no man has lived to tell. Come, draw near to the door of the shrine and hearken, maybe thou wilt hear the Hathor singing. Have no fear; thou needst not approach the guarded space."

Then the Wanderer drew near with a doubting heart, but Rei the Priest stood afar off, though the temple priests came close enough. At the curtains they stopped and listened. Then from within the shrine there came a sound of singing wild and sweet and shrill, and the voice of it stirred the Wanderer strangely, bringing to his mind memories of that Ithaca of which he was Lord and should see no more; of the happy days of youth, and of the God-built walls of windy Ilios. But he could not have told why he thought on these things, nor why his heart was thus strangely stirred within him.

"Hearken! the Hathor sings as she weaves the doom of men," said the priest, and as he spoke the singing ended.

Then the Wanderer took counsel with himself whether he should then and there burst the doors and take his fortune, or whether he should forbear for that while But in the end he determined to forbear and see with his own eyes what befell those who strove to win the way.

So he drew back, wondering much; and, bidding farewell to the aged priest, he went with Rei, the Master Builder, through the town of Tanis, where the Apura were still spoiling the people of Khem, and he came to the Palace where he was lodged. Here he turned over in his mind how he might see the strange woman of the temple, and yet escape the baths of bronze, which he loved not. There he sat and thought till at lengh the night drew on, and one came to summon him to sup with Pharaoh in the Hall. Then he rose up and went, and meeting Pharaoh and Meriamun the Queen in the outer chamber, passed in after them to the Hall, and on to that daïs which he had held against the rabble, for the place was clear of dead, and, save for certain stains upon the marble floor that might not be washed away, and for some few arrows that yet were fixed high up in the walls or in the lofty roof, there was nothing to tell of the great fray that had been fought but one day gone.

Heavy was the face of Pharaoh, and the few who sat with him were sad enough because of the death of so many whom they loved, and the shame and sorrow that had fallen upon Khem. But there were no tears for her one child in the eyes of Meriamun the Queen. Anger, not grief, tore her heart because Pharaoh had let the Apura go. For ever as they sat at the sad feast there came a sound of the tramping feet of armies, and of lowing cattle, and songs of triumph, sung by ten thousand voices, and thus they sang:—

SONG OF THE APURA.

A lamp for our feet the Lord hath litten,
  Signs hath He shown in the Land of Khem.
The Kings of the Nations our Lord hath smitten,
  His shoe hath He cast o'er the Gods of them.
He hath made him a mock of the heifer of Isis.
  He hath broken the chariot reins of Ra,
On Yakûb He cries, and His folk arises
  And the knees of the Nations are loosed in awe.

He gives us their goods for a spoil to gather,
Jewels of silver, and vessels of gold.
For Yahveh of old is our Friend and Father,
And cherisheth Yakûb He chose of old.
The Gods of the Peoples our Lord hath chidden,
Their courts hath He filled with His creeping things;
The light of the face of the Sun He hath hidden,
And broken the scourge in the hands of kings.

He hath chastened His people with stripes and scourges,
Our backs hath He burdened with grievous weights,
But His people shall rise as a sea that surges,
And flood the fields of the men He hates.
The Kings of the Nations our Lord hath smitten,
His shoe hath He cast o'er the Gods of them,
But a lamp for our feet the Lord hath litten,
Wonders hath wrought in the Land of Khem.

Thus they sang, and the singing was so wild that the Wanderer craved leave to go and stand at the Palace gate, lest the Apura should rush in and spoil the treasure-chamber.

The King nodded, but Meriamun rose, and went with the Wanderer as he took his bow and passed to the great gates.

There they stood in the shadow of the gates, and this is what they beheld. A great light of many torches was flaring along the roadway in front. Then came a body of men, rudely armed with pikes, and the torchlight shone on the glitter of bronze and on the gold helms of which they had spoiled the soldiers of Khem. Next came a troop of wild women, dancing, and beating timbrels, and singing the triumphant hymn of scorn.

Next, with a space between, tramped eight strong, black-bearded men, bearing on their shoulders a great gilded coffin, covered with carven and painted signs.

"It is the body of their Prophet, who brought them hither out of their land of hunger," whispered Meriamun. "Slaves, ye shall hunger yet in the wilderness, and clamour for the fleshpots of Khem!"

Then she cried in a loud voice, for her passion overcame her, and she prophesied to those who bare the coffin, "Not one soul of you that lives shall see the land where your conjurer is leading you! Ye shall thirst, ye shall hunger, ye shall call on the Gods of Khem, and they shall not hear you; ye shall die, and your bones shall whiten the wilderness. Farewell! Set go with you. Farewell!"

So she cried and pointed down the way, and so fierce was her gaze, and so awful her words, that the people of the Apura trembled and the women ceased to sing.

The Wanderer watched the Queen and marvelled. "Never had woman such a hardy heart," he mused; "and it were ill to cross her in love or war!"

"They will sing no more at my gates," murmured Meriamun, with a smile. "Come, Wanderer; they await us," and she gave him her hand that he might lead her.

So they went back to the banquet hall.

They hearkened as they sat till far in the night, and still the Apura passed, countless as the sands of the sea. At length all were gone and the sound of

their feet died away in the distance. Then Meriamun the Queen turned to Pharaoh and spake bitterly :

"Thou art a coward, Meneptah, ay, a coward and a slave at heart. In thy fear of the curse that the False Hathor hath laid on us, she whom thou dost worship, to thy shame, thou hast let these slaves go. Otherwise had our father dealt with them, great Rameses Miamun, the hammer of the Khita. Now they are gone hissing curses on the land that bare them, and robbing those who nursed them up while they were yet a little people, as a mother nurses her child."

"What then might I do?" said Pharaoh.

"There is nought to do : all is done," answered Meriamun. "What is thy counsel, Wanderer?"

"It is ill for a stranger to offer counsel," said the Wanderer.

"Nay, speak," cried the Queen.

"I know not the Gods of this land," he answered. "If these people be favoured of the Gods, I say sit still. But if not," then said the Wanderer, wise in war, "let Pharaoh gather his host, follow after the people, take them unawares and smite them utterly. It is no hard task, they are so mixed a multitude and cumbered with much baggage!"

This was to speak as the Queen loved to hear. Now she clapped her hands and cried :

"Listen, listen, to good counsel, Pharaoh."

And now that the Apura were gone, his fear of them went also, and as he drank wine Pharaoh grew bold, till at last he sprang to his feet and swore by Amen, by Osiris, by Ptah, and by his father—great Rameses—that he would follow after the Apura and smite them. And instantly he sent forth messengers to summon the captains of his host in the Hall of Assembly.

Thither the captains came, and their plans were made and messengers hurried forth to the governors of other great cities, bidding them send troops to join the host of Pharaoh on its march.

Now Pharaoh turned to the Wanderer and said :

"Thou hast not yet answered my message that Rei carried to thee this morning. Wilt thou take service with me and be a captain in this war?"

The Wanderer little liked the name of service, but his warlike heart was stirred within him, for he loved the delight of battle. But before he could answer yea or nay, Meriamun the Queen, who was not minded that he should leave her spoke hastily :

"This is my counsel, Meneptah, that the Lord Eperitus should abide here in Tanis and be the Captain of my Guard while thou art gone to smite the Apura. For I may not be here unguarded in these troublous times, and if I know he watches over me, he who is so mighty a man, then I shall walk safely and sleep in peace."

Now the Wanderer bethought him of his desire to look upon the Hathor, for to see new things and try new adventures was always his delight. So he answered that if it was pleasing to Pharaoh and the Queen he would willingly stay and command the Guard. And Pharaoh said that it should be so.

Chapter IV.

THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER.

At midday on the morrow Pharaoh and the host of Pharaoh marched in pomp from Tanis, taking the road that runs across the desert country toward the Sea of Weeds, the way that the Apura had gone. The Wanderer went with the army for an hour's journey and more, in a chariot driven by Rei, the Priest, for Rei did not march with the host. The number of the soldiers of Pharaoh amazed the Achæan, accustomed to the levies of barren isles and scattered tribes. But he said nothing of his wonder to Rei or any man, lest it should be thought that he came from among a little people. He even made as if he held the army lightly, and asked the priest if this was all the strength of Pharaoh! Then Rei told him that it was but a fourth part, for none of the mercenaries and none of the soldiers from the Upper Land marched with the King in pursuit of the Apura.

Then the Wanderer knew that he was come among a greater people than he had ever encountered yet, on land or sea. So he went with them till the roads divided, and there he drove his chariot to the chariot of Pharaoh and bade him farewell. Pharaoh called to him to mount his own chariot and spake thus to him :

"Swear to me, thou Wanderer, who namest thyself Eperitus, though of what country thou art and what was thy father's house none know, swear to me that thou wilt guard Meriamun the Queen faithfully, and wilt work no woe upon me nor upon my house while I am afar. Great thou art and beautiful to look on, ay, and strong beyond the strength of men, yet my heart misdoubts me of thee. For methinks thou art a crafty man and that evil will come upon me through thee."

"If this be thy mind, Pharaoh," said the Wanderer, "leave me not in guard of the Queen. And yet methinks I did not befriend thee so ill two nights gone, when the rabble would have put thee and all thy house to the sword because of the death of the firstborn."

Now Pharaoh looked on him long and doubtfully, then stretched out his hand. The Wanderer took it, and swore by his own Gods, by Zeus, by Aphrodite, and Athene, and Apollo, that he would be true to the trust.

"I believe thee, Wanderer," said the Pharaoh. "Know this, if thou keepest thine oath thou shalt have great rewards, and thou shalt be second to none in the land of Khem, but if thou failest then shalt thou die miserably."

"I ask no fee," answered the Wanderer, "and I fear no death, for in one way only shall I die, and that is known to me. Yet I will keep my oath." And he bowed before Pharaoh, and leaping from his chariot entered again into the chariot of Rei.

Now, as he drove back through the host the soldiers called to him, saying :

"Leave us not, thou Wanderer." For he looked so glorious in his golden armour that it seemed to them as though a god departed from their ranks.

His heart was with them, for he loved war, and he did not love the Apura. But he drove on, as so it must be, and came to the Palace at sundown.

That night he sat at the feast by the side of Meriamun the Queen. And when the feast was done she bade him follow her into her chamber where she sat when she would be alone. It was a fragrant chamber, dimly lighted with

sweet-scented lamps, furnished with couches of ivory and gold, while all the walls told painted stories of strange gods and kings, and of their loves and wars. The Queen sank back upon the broidered cushions of a couch and bade the wise Odysseus sit over against her, so near that her robes swept his golden greaves. This he did somewhat against his will, though he was no hater of fair women. But his heart misdoubted the dark-eyed Queen, and he looked upon her guardedly, for she was strangely fair to see, the fairest of all mortal women whom he had known, save the Golden Helen.

"Wanderer, we owe thee great thanks, and I would gladly know to whom we are in debt for the prices of our lives," she said. "Tell me of thy birth, of thy father's house, and of the lands that thou hast seen and the wars wherein thou hast fought. Tell me also of the sack of Ilios, and how thou camest by thy golden mail? The unhappy Paris wore such arms as these, if the minstrel of the North sang truth."

Now, the Wanderer would gladly have cursed this minstrel from the North and his songs.

"Minstrels will be lying, Lady," he said, "and they gather old tales wherever they go. Paris may have worn my arms, or another man. I bought them from a chapman in Crete, and asked nothing of their first master. As for Ilios, I fought there in my youth, and served the Cretan Idomeneus, but I got little booty. To the Kings, the wealth and women, to us the sword strokes. Such is the appearance of war."

Meriamun listened to his tale, which he set forth roughly, as if he were some blunt, grumbling swordsman, and darkly she looked on him while she hearkened, and darkly she smiled as she looked.

"A strange story, Eperitus, a strange story truly. Now tell me this. How camest thou by yonder great bow, the bow of the swallow string? If my minstrel spoke truly, it was once the Bow of Eurytus of Œchalia."

Now the Wanderer glanced round him like a man taken in ambush, who sees on every hand the sword of foes shine up into the sunlight.

"The bow, Lady?" he answered readily enough. "I got it strangely. I was cruising with a cargo of iron on the western coast and landed on an isle, methinks the pilot called it Ithaca. There we found nothing but death; a pestilence had been in the land, but in a ruined hall this bow was lying, and I made prize of it. A good bow!"

"A strange story, truly—a very strange story," quoth Meriamun the Queen. "By chance thou didst buy the armour of Paris, by chance thou didst find the bow of Eurytus, that bow, methinks, with which the Godlike Odysseus slew the wooers in his halls. Knowest thou, Eperitus, that when thou stoodest yonder on the board in the Place of Banquets, when the great bow twanged and the long shafts hailed down the hall and loosened the knees of many, not a little was I minded of the song of the slaying of the wooers at the hands of Odysseus. The fame of Odysseus has wandered far—ay, even to Khem." And she looked straight at him.

The Wanderer darkened his face and put the matter by. He had heard something of that tale, he said, but deemed it a minstrel's feigning. One man could not fight a hundred, as the story went.

The Queen half rose from the couch where she lay curled up like a glittering snake. Like a snake she rose and watched him with her melancholy eyes.

"Strange, indeed—most strange that Odysseus, Laertes' son, Odysseus of Ithaca, should not know the tale of the slaying of the wooers by Odysseus' self. Strange, indeed, thou Eperitus who art Odysseus."

Now the neck of the Wanderer was in the noose, and well he knew it: yet he kept his counsel, and looked upon her vacantly.

"Men say that this Odysseus wandered years ago into the North, and that this time he will not come again. I saw him in the wars, and he was a taller man than I," said the Wanderer.

"I have always heard," said the Queen, "that Odysseus was double-tongued and crafty as a fox. Look me in the eyes, thou Wanderer, look me in the eyes, and I will show thee whether or not thou art Odysseus," and she leaned forward so that her hair well nigh swept his brow, and gazed deep into his eyes.

Now the Wanderer was ashamed to drop his eyes before a woman's, and he could not rise and go; so he must needs gaze, and as he gazed his head grew strangely light and his blood quivered in his veins, and then seemed to stop.

"Now turn, thou Wanderer," said the voice of the Queen, and to him it sounded far away, as if there was a wall between them, "and tell me what thou seest."

So he turned and looked towards the dark end of the chamber. But presently through the darkness stole a faint light, like the first grey of the dawn, and now he saw a shape, like the shape of a great horse of wood, and behind the horse were black square towers of huge stones, and gates, and walls, and houses. Now he saw a door open in the side of the horse, and a helmeted head of a man looked out warily. As he looked a great white star slid down the sky so that the light of it rested on the face of the man, and the face was his own! Then he remembered how he had looked forth from the belly of the wooden horse as it stood within the walls of Ilios, and thus the star had seemed to fall upon the doomed city, an omen of the end of Troy.

"Look again," said the voice of Meriamun from far away.

So once more he looked into the darkness, and there he saw the mouth of a cave, and beneath two palms in front of it sat a man and a woman. The yellow moon rose and its light fell upon a sleeping sea, upon tall trees, upon the cave, and the two who sat there. The woman was lovely, with braided hair, and clad in a shining robe, and her eyes were dim with tears that she might never shed: for she was a Goddess, Calypso, the daughter of Atlas. Then in the vision, the man looked up, and his face was weary, and worn and sick for home, but it was his own face.

Then he remembered how he had sat thus at the side of Calypso of the braided tresses, on that last night of all his nights in her wave-girt isle, the centre of the seas.

"Look once more," said the voice of Meriamun the Queen.

Again he looked into the darkness. There before him grew the ruins of his own hall in Ithaca, and in the courtyard before the hall was a heap of ashes, and the charred bones of men. Before the heap lay the figure of one lost in sorrow, for his limbs writhed upon the ground. Anon the man lifted his face and behold! the Wanderer knew that it was his own face.

Then of a sudden the gloom passed away from the chamber, and once more his blood surged through his veins, and there before him sat Meriamun he Queen, smiling darkly.

"Strange sights hast thou seen, is it not so, Wanderer?" she said.

"Yea, Queen, the most strange of sights. Tell me of thy courtesy how thou didst conjure them before my eyes."

"By the magic that I have, Eperitus, I above all wizards who dwell in Khem, the magic whereby I can read all the past of those—I love," and again she looked upon him, "ay, and call it forth from the storehouse of dead time and make it live again. Say, whose face was it that thou didst look upon—was it not the face of Odysseus of Ithaca, Laertes' son, and was not that face thine?"

Now the Wanderer saw that there was no escape. Therefore he spoke the truth, not because he loved it, but because he must.

"The face of Odysseus of Ithaca it was that I saw before me, Lady, and that face is mine. I avow myself to be Odysseus, Laertes' son, and no other man."

The Queen laughed aloud. "Great must be my strength of magic," she said, "for it can strip the guile from the subtlest of men. Henceforth, Odysseus thou wilt know that the eyes of Meriamun the Queen see far. Now tell me truly: what camest thou hither to seek?"

The Wanderer took swift counsel with himself. Remembering that dream of Meriamun of which Rei the priest had told him, and which she knew not that he had learned, the dream that showed her the vision of one whom she must love, and remembering the word of the dead Hataska, he grew afraid. For he knew well by the token of the spear point that he was the man of her dream, and that she knew it. But he could not accept her love, both because of his oath to Pharaoh and because of her whom Aphrodite had shown to him in Ithaca, her whom alone he must seek, the Heart's Desire, the Golden Helen.

The strait was desperate, between a broken oath and a woman scorned. But he feared his oath, and the anger of Zeus, the God of hosts and guests So he sought safety beneath the wings of truth.

"Lady," he said, "I will tell thee all! I came to Ithaca from the white North, where a curse had driven me; I came and found my halls desolate, and my people dead, and the very ashes of my wife. But in a dream of the night I saw the Goddess whom I have worshipped little, Aphrodite of Idalia, whom in this land ye name Hathor, and she bade me go forth and do her will. And for reward she promised me that I should find one who waited me to be my deathless love."

Meriamun heard him so far, but no further, for of this she made sure, that *she* was the woman whom Aphrodite had promised to the Wanderer. Ere he might speak another word she glided to him like a snake, and like a snake curled herself about him. Then she spoke so low that he rather knew her thought than heard her words:

"Was it indeed so, Odysseus? Did the Goddess indeed send thee to seek me out? Know, then, that not to thee alone did she speak. I also looked for thee, I also waited the coming of one whom I should love. Oh, heavy have been the days, and empty my heart, and sorely through the years have I longed for him who should be brought to me. And now at length it is done, now at length I see him whom in my dream I saw," and she lifted her lips to the lips of the Wanderer, and her heart, and her eyes, and her lips said "Love."

But it was not for nothing that he bore a stout and patient heart, and a brain unclouded by danger, or by love. He had never been in a strait like this; caught

with bonds that no sword could cut, and in toils that no skill could undo. On one side were love and pleasure—on the other a broken oath, and the loss for ever of the Heart's Desire. For to love another woman, as he had been warned, was to lose Helen. But again, if he scorned the Queen—nay, for all his hardihood he dared not tell her that she was not the woman of his vision, the woman he came to seek. Yet even now his cold courage and his cunning did not fail him.

"Lady," he said, "we both have dreamed. But if thou didst dream thou wert my love, thou didst wake to find thyself the wife of Pharaoh. And Pharaoh is my host and hath my oath."

"I woke to find myself the wife of Pharaoh," she echoed, wearily, and her arms uncurled from his neck and she sank back on the couch. "I am Pharaoh's wife in word, but not in deed. Pharaoh is nothing to me, thou Wanderer—nought save a name."

"Yet is my oath much to me, Queen Meriamun—my oath and the hospitable hearth," the Wanderer made answer. "I swore to Meneptah to hold thee from all ill, and there's an end."

"And if Pharaoh comes back no more, what then, Odysseus?"

"Then will we talk again. And now, Lady, thy safety calls me to visit thy Guard." And without more words he rose and went.

The Queen looked after him.

"A strange man," she said, in her heart, "who builds a barrier with his oath betwixt himself and her he loves and has wandered so far to win! Yet methinks I honour him the more. Pharaoh Meneptah, my husband, eat, drink, and be merry, for this I promise thee, short shall be thy days."

Chapter V.

THE CHAPEL PERILOUS.

"Swift as a bird or a thought," says the old harper of the Northern Sea. The Wanderer's thoughts in the morning were swift as night birds, flying back and brooding over the things he had seen and the words he had heard in the Queen's chamber. Again he stood between this woman and the oath which, of all oaths, was the worst to break. And, indeed, he was little tempted to break it, for though Meriamun was beautiful and wise, he feared her love and he feared her magic art no less than he feared her vengeance if she were scorned. Delay seemed the only course. Let him wait till the King returned, and it would go hard but he found some cause for leaving the city of Tanis, and seeking through new adventures the World's Desire. The mysterious river lay yonder. He would ascend the river of which so many tales were told. It flowed from the land of the blameless Æthiopians, the most just of men, at whose tables the very Gods sat as guests. There, perchance, far up the sacred stream, in a land where no wrong ever came, there, if the Fate permitted, he might find the Golden Helen.

If the Fates permitted: but all the adventure was of the Fates, who had shown him to Meriamun in a dream.

He turned it long in his mind and found little light. It seemed that as he

had drifted through darkness across a blood-red sea to the shores of Khem, so he should wade through blood to that shore of Fate which the Gods appointed.

Yet after a while he shook sorrow from him, arose, bathed, anointed himself, combed his dark locks, and girded on his golden armour. For now he remembered that this was the day when the strange Hathor should stand upon the pylon of the temple and call the people to her, and he was determined to look upon her, and if need be do battle with that which guarded her.

So he prayed to Aphrodite that she would help him, and he poured out wine to her and waited; he waited, but no answer came to his prayer. Yet as he turned away it chanced that he saw his countenance in the wide golden cup whence he had poured, and it seemed to him that it had grown more fair and lost the stamp of years, and that his face was smooth and young as the face of that Odysseus who, many years ago, had sailed in the black ships and looked back on the smoking ruins of windy Troy. In this he saw the hand of the Goddess, and knew that if she might not be manifest in this land of strange Gods, yet she was with him. And, knowing this, his heart grew light as the heart of a boy from whom sorrow is yet a long way off, and who has not dreamed of death.

Then he ate and drank, and when he had put from him the desire of food he arose and girded on the sword, Euryalus's gift, but the black bow he left in its case. Now he was ready and about to set forth when Rei the Priest entered the chamber.

"Whither goest thou, Eperitus?" asked Rei, the instructed Priest. "And what is it that hath made thy face so fair, as though many years had been lifted from thy back?"

"'Tis but sweet sleep, Rei," said the Wanderer. "Deeply I slept last night, and the weariness of my wanderings fell from me, and now I am as I was before I sailed across the blood-red sea into the night."

"Sell thou the secret of this sleep to the ladies of Khem," answered the aged Priest, smiling, "and little shalt thou lack of wealth for all thy days."

Thus he spake as though he believed the Wanderer, but in his heart he knew that the thing was of the Gods.

The Wanderer answered:

"I go up to the Temple of the Hathor, for thou dost remember it is to-day that she stands upon the pylon brow and calls the people to her. Comest thou also, Rei?"

"Nay, nay, I come not, Eperitus. I am old indeed, but yet the blood creeps through these withered veins, and, perchance, if I came and looked, the madness would seize me also, and I, too, should rush on to my slaying. There is a way in which a man may listen to the voice of the Hathor, and that is to have his eyes blindfolded, as many do. But even then he will tear the bandage from his eyes, and look, and die with the others. Oh, go not up, Eperitus—I pray thee go not up. I love thee—I know not why—and am little minded to see thee dead. Though, perchance," he added, as though to himself, "it would be well for those I serve if thou wert dead, thou Wanderer, with the eyes of Fate."

"Have no fear, Rei," said the Wanderer, "as it is doomed so shall I die and not otherwise. Never shall it be told," he murmured in his heart, "that he who stood in arms against Scylla, the Horror of the Rock, turned back from any form of fear or from any shape of Love."

Then Rei wrung his hands and went nigh to weeping, for to him it seemed a pitiful thing that so goodly a man and so great a hero should thus be done to death. But the Wanderer passed out through the city and Rei went with him for a certain distance. At length they came to the road set on either side with sphinxes, that leads from the outer wall of brick to the garden of the Temple of Hathor, and down this road hurried a multitude of men of all races and of every age. Here the prince was borne along in his litter; here the young noble travelled in his chariot. Here came the slave bespattered with the mud of the fields; here the cripple limped upon his crutches; and here was the blind man led by a hound. And with each man came women: the wife of the man, or his mother, or his sisters, or she to whom he was vowed in marriage. Weeping they came, and with soft words and clinging arms they strove to hold back him whom they loved.

"Oh, my son! my son!" cried a woman, "hearken to thy mother's voice. Go not up to look upon the Goddess, for if thou dost look then shalt thou die, and thou alone art left alive to me. Two brothers of thine I bore, and behold, both are dead; and wilt thou die also, and leave me, who am old, alone, and desolate? Be not mad, my son, thou art the dearest of all; ever have I loved thee and tended thee. Come back, I pray—come back."

But her son heard not and heeded not, pressing on toward the Gates of the Heart's Desire.

"Oh, my husband, my husband!" cried another, young, of gentle birth, and fair, who bare a babe on her left arm and with the right clutched her lord's broidered robe. "Oh, my husband, have I not loved thee and been kind to thee, and wilt thou still go up to look upon the deadly beauty of the Hathor? They say she wears the beauty of the Dead. Lovest thou me not better than her who died five years agone, Merisa the daughter of Rois, though thou didst love her first? See, here is thy babe, thy babe, but one week born. Even from my bed of pain I have risen and followed after thee down these weary roads, and I am like to lose my life for it. Here is thy babe, let it plead with thee. Let me die if so it must be, but go not thou up to thy death. It is no Goddess whom thou wilt see, but an evil spirit loosed from the underworld, and that shall be thy doom. Oh, if I please thee not, take thou another wife and I will make her welcome, only go not up to thy death!"

But the man fixed his eyes upon the pylon tops, heeding her not, and at length she sank upon the road and there with the babe would have been crushed by the chariots, had not the Wanderer borne her to one side of the way.

Now, of all sights this was the most dreadful, for on every side came the prayers and lamentations of women, and still the multitude of men pressed on unheeding.

"Now thou seest the power of Love, and how if a woman be but beautiful enough she may drag all men to ruin," said Rei the Priest.

"Yes," said the Wanderer; "a strange sight, truly. Much blood hath this Hathor of thine upon her hands."

"And yet thou wilt give her thine, Wanderer."

"That I am not minded to do," he answered; "yet will I look upon her face, so speak no more of it."

Now they were come to the space before the bronze gates of the pylon of the outer court, and there the multitude gathered to the number of many hundreds. Presently, as they watched, a priest came to the gates, that same priest who had shown the Wanderer the bodies in the baths of bronze. He looked through the bars and cried aloud:

"Whoso would enter into the court and look upon the holy Hathor let him draw nigh. Know ye this, all men, the Hathor is to him who can win her. But if he pass not, then shall he die and be buried within the Temple, nor ever shall he look upon the sun again. Of this are ye warned. Since the Hathor came again to Khem, of men seven hundred and three have gone up to win her, and of bodies seven hundred and two lie within the vaults, for of all these men Pharaoh Meneptah alone hath gone back living. Yet is there place for more! Enter ye who would look upon the Hathor!"

Now there rose a mighty wailing from the women. They clung madly about the necks of those who were dear to them, and some clung not in vain. For the hearts of many failed them at the last, and they shrank from entering in. But a few of those who had already looked upon the Hathor from afar, perchance a score in all, struck the women from them and rushed up to the gates.

"Surely thou wilt not enter in?" quoth Rei, clinging to the arm of the Wanderer. "Oh, turn thy back on death and come back with me. I pray thee turn."

"Nay," said the Wanderer, "I will go in."

Then Rei the Priest threw dust upon his head, wept aloud, and turned and fled, never stopping till he came to the Palace, where sat Meriamun the Queen.

Now the priest unbarred a wicket in the gates of bronze, and one by one those who were stricken of the madness entered in. For all of these had seen the Hathor many times from afar without the wall, and now they could no more withstand their longing. And as they entered two other priests took them by the hand and bound their eyes with cloths, so that unless they willed it they might not see the glory of the Hathor, but only hear the sweetness of her voice. But two there were who would not be blindfolded, and of these one was that man whose wife had fainted by the way, and the other was a man sightless from his youth. For although he might not see the beauty of the Goddess, this man was made mad by the sweetness of her voice. Now, when all had entered in, save the Wanderer, there was a stir in the crowd, and a man rushed up. He was travel-stained, he had a black beard, black eyes, and a nose hooked like a vulture's beak.

"Hold!" he cried. "Hold! Shut not the gates! Night and day have I journeyed from the host of the Apura who fly into the wilderness. Night and day I have journeyed, leaving wife and flocks and children and the Promise of the Land, that I may once more look upon the beauty of the Hathor. Shut not the gates!"

"Pass in," said the priest, "pass in, so shall we be rid of one of those whom Khem nurtured up to rob her."

He entered; then, as the priest was about to bar the wicket, the Wanderer strode forward, and his golden armour clashed beneath the portal.

"Wouldst thou indeed enter to thy doom, thou mighty lord?" asked the priest, for he knew him well again

"Ay, I enter; but perchance not to my doom," answered the Wanderer. Then he passed in and the brazen gate was shut behind him.

Now the two priests came forward to bind his eyes, but this he would not endure.

"Not so," he said; "here am I come to see what may be seen."

"Go to, thou madman, go to! and die the death," they answered, and led all the men to the centre of the courtyard whence they might see the pylon top. Then the priests also covered up their eyes and cast themselves at length upon the ground; so for a while they lay, and all was silence within and without the court, for they waited the coming of the Hathor. The Wanderer glanced through the bars of bronze at the multitude gathered there. Silent they stood with upturned eyes, even the women had ceased from weeping and stood in silence. He looked at those beside him. Their bandaged faces were lifted and they stared towards the pylon top as though their vision pierced the cloths. The blind man, too, stared upward, and his pale lips moved, but no sound came from them. Now at the foot of the pylon lay a little rim of shadow. Thinner and thinner it grew as the moments crept on towards the perfect noon. Now there was but a line and now the line was gone, for the sun's red disc burned high in the blue heaven straight above the pylon brow. Then suddenly and from far there came a faint sweet sound of singing, and at the first note of the sound a great sigh went up through the quiet air, from all the multitude without. Those who were near the Wanderer sighed also, and their lips and fingers twitched, and he himself sighed, though he knew not why.

Nearer came the sweet sound of singing, and stronger it swelled, till presently those without the temple gate who were on higher ground caught sight of her who sang. Then a hoarse roar went up from every throat, and madness took them. On they rushed, dashing themselves against the gates of bronze and the steep walls on either side, and madly beat upon them with their fists and brows, and climbed on each other's shoulders, gnawing at the bars with their teeth, crying to be let in. But the women threw their arms about them and screamed curses on her whose beauty brought all men to madness.

So it went for a while, till presently the Wanderer looked up and lo! there upon the pylon's brow stood the woman's self, and at her coming all men were once more silent. She was tall and straight, clad in clinging white, but on her breast there glowed a blood-red ruby stone, fashioned like a star, and from it fell red drops that stained for one moment the whiteness of her robes, and then the robe was white again. Her golden hair was tossed this way and that, and shone in the sunlight, her arms and neck were bare, and she held one hand before her eyes as though to hide the brightness of her beauty. For, indeed, she could not be called beautiful, but Beauty itself.

And they who had not loved saw in her that first love whom no man has ever won, and they who had loved saw that first love whom every man has lost. And all about her rolled a glory—like the glory of the dying day. Sweetly she sang a song of promise, and her voice was the voice of each man's desire, and the heart of the Wanderer thrilled in answer to it as thrills a harp smitten by a cunning hand; and thus she sang:

Whom hast thou longed for most
True love of mine?
Whom hast thou loved and lost?
Lo, she is thine!

She that another wed
Breaks from her vow;
She that hath long been dead
Wakes for thee now.

Dreams haunt the hapless bed,
Ghosts haunt the night,
Life crowns her living head,
Love and Delight.

Nay, not a dream nor ghost,
Nay, but Divine,
She that was loved and lost
Waits to be thine!

She ceased, and a moan of desire went up from all who heard.

Then the Wanderer saw that those beside him tore at the bandages about their brows and rent them loose. Only the priests who lay upon the ground stirred not, though they also moaned.

And now again she sang, still holding her hand before her face:

Ye that seek me, ye that sue me,
Ye that flock beneath my tower,
Ye would win me, would undo me,
I must perish in an hour,
Dead before the Love that slew me, clasped the
Bride and crushed the flower.

Hear the word and mark the warning,
Beauty lives but in your sight,
Beauty fades from all men's scorning
In the watches of the night,
Beauty wanes before the morning, an
Love dies in his delight.

She ceased, and once more there was silence. Then suddenly she bent forward across the pylon brow (so far that it seemed that she must fall), and stretching out her arms as though to clasp those beneath, showed all the glory of her loveliness.

The Wanderer looked, then dropped his eyes as one who has seen the brightness of the noonday sun. In the darkness of his mind the world was lost, and he could think of nought save the clamour of the people, which fretted his ears. They were all crying, and none were listening.

"See—see!" shouted one. "Look at her hair; it is dark as the raven's wing, and her eyes—they are dark as night. Oh, my love! oh, love of mine!"

"See! see!" cried another, "were ever skies so blue as those eyes of hers, was ever foam so white as those white arms?"

"Even so she looked whom once I wed many summers gone," murmured a third, "even so when first I drew her veil. Hers was that gentle smile breaking like ripples on the water, hers that curling hair, hers that child-like grace."

"Was ever woman so queenly made?" said a fourth. "Look now on the

brow of pride, look on the deep, dark eyes of storm, the arched lips, and the imperial air. Ah, here indeed is a Goddess meet for worship."

"Not so I see her," cried a fifth, that man who had come from the host of the Apura. "Pale she is and fair, tall indeed, but delicately shaped, brown is her hair, and brown are her great eyes like the eyes of a stag, and ah, sadly she looks upon me, longing for my love."

"My eyes are opened," screamed the blind man at the Wanderer's side. "My eyes are opened and I see the pylon tower and the splendid sun. Love hath touched me on the eyes and they are opened. But lo! not one shape hath she but many shapes. Oh, she is Beauty's self, and no tongue may tell her glory. Let me die! let me die, for my eyes are opened. I have looked on Beauty's self! I know what all the world journeys on to seek and why we die and what we go to find in death."

Chapter VI.

THE WARDENS OF THE GATE.

THE clamour swelled or sank, and the men called and cried the names of many women, some dead, some lost. Others were mute, silent in the presence of the World's Desire, silent as when we see lost faces in a dream. The Wanderer had looked once and then cast down his eyes and stood with his face hidden in his hands. He alone waited and strove to think; the rest were abandoned to the bewilderment of their passions and their amaze.

What was it that he had seen? That which he had sought his whole life long; sought by sea and land, not knowing what he sought. For this he had wandered with a hungry heart, and now was the hunger of his heart to be appeased? Between him and her was the unknown barrier and the invisible Death. Was he to pass the unmarked boundary, to force those guarded gates and achieve where all had failed? Had a magic deceived his eyes? Did he look but on a picture and a vision that some art could call again from the haunted place of Memory?

He sighed and looked again. Lo! in his charmed sight a fair girl seemed to stand upon the pylon brow, and on her head she bore a shining urn of bronze.

He knew her now. He had seen her thus at the court of King Tyndareus as he drove in his chariot through the ford of Eurotas; thus he had seen her in the dream on the Silent Isle.

Again he sighed and again he looked. Now in his charmed sight a woman sat, whose face was the face of the girl, grown more lovely far, but sad with grief and touched with shame.

He saw her and he knew her. So he had seen her in Troy towers when he stole thither in a beggar's guise from the camp of the Achæans. So he had seen her when she saved his life in Ilios.

Again he sighed and again he looked, and now he saw the GOLDEN HELEN.

She stood upon the pylon's brow. She stood with arms outstretched, with eyes upturned, and on her shining face there was a smile like the infinite smile

of the dawn. Oh, now, indeed, he knew the shape that was Beauty's self—the innocent Spirit of Love sent on earth by the undying Gods to be the doom and the delight of men ; to draw them through the ways of strife to the unknown end.

A while the Golden Helen stood thus looking up and out to the worlds beyond ; to the peace beyond the strife, to the goal beyond the grave. Thus she stood while men scarce dared to breathe, summoning all to come and take that which upon the earth is guarded so invincibly.

Then once more she sang, and as she sang slowly drew herself away, till at length nought was left of the vision of her save the sweetness of her dying song.

Who wins his Love shall lose her,
  Who loses her shall gain,
For still the spirit woos her,
  A soul without a stain ;
And Memory still pursues her
  With longings not in vain !

He loses her who gains her,
  Who watches day by day
The dust of time that stains her,
  The griefs that leave her grey,
The flesh that yet enchains her
  Whose grace hath passed away !

Oh, happier he who gains not
  The Love some seem to gain :
The Joy that custom stains not
  Shall still with him remain,
The loveliness that wanes not,
  The Love that ne'er can wane.

In dreams she grows not older
  The lands of Dream among,
Though all the world wax colder,
  Though all the songs be sung,
In dreams doth he behold her
  Still fair and kind and young.

Now the silence died away and again madness came upon those who had listened and looked. The men without the wall once more hurled themselves against the gates, while the women clung to them, shrieking curses on the beauty of the Hathor, for the song meant nothing to these women, and their arms were about those whom they loved and who won them their bread. But most of the men who were in the outer court rushed up to the inner gates within which stood the alabaster shrine of the Hathor. Some flung themselves upon the ground and clutched at it, as in dreams men fling themselves down to be saved from falling into a pit that has no bottom. Yet as in those evil dreams men are drawn inch by inch to the mouth of the pit by an unseen hand, these wretched men were dragged along the ground by the might of their own desire. In vain they set their feet against the stones to hold themselves from going, for

they thrust forward yet more fiercely with their hands, and thus little by little drew near the inner gates writhing forwards yet moving backwards like a wounded snake dragged along by a rope. For of those who thus entered the outer court and looked on the Hathor, few might go back alive.

Now the priests drew the cloths from their eyes, rose, and flung wide the second gates, and there, but a little way off, the veil of the shrine was wavering as if in a wind. For now the doors beyond the veil were thrown wide, as might be seen when the wind swayed their Tyrian web, and through the curtains came the sound of the same sweet singing.

"Draw near! Draw near!" cried the ancient priest. "Let him who would win the Hathor draw near!"

Now at first the Wanderer was minded to rush on. But his desire had not wholly overcome him nor had his wisdom left him. He took counsel with his eart and waited to let the others go, and to see how it fared with them.

The worshippers were now hurrying back and now starting onwards, as fear and longing seized them, till the man who was blind drew near, led by the hand of a priest, for his hound might not enter the second court of the temple.

"Do ye fear?" he cried. "Cowards, I fear not. It is better to die having looked upon the glory of the Hathor than to live and never see her more. Set my face straight, ye priests, set my face straight, at the worst I can but die."

So they led him as near the curtains as they dared to go and set his face straight. Then with a great cry he rushed on. But he was caught and whirled about like a leaf in a wind, so that he fell. He rose and again rushed on, again to be whirled back. A third time he rose and rushed on, smiting with his blind man's staff. The blow fell, and stayed in mid-air, and there came a hollow sound as of a smitten shield and the staff that dealt the blow was shattered. Then there was a noise like the noise of clashing swords, and the man instantly sank down dead, though the Wanderer could see no wound upon him.

"Draw near! Draw near!" cried the priest again. "This one is fallen. Let him who would win the Hathor draw near!"

Then the man who had fled from the host of the Apura rushed forward, crying on the Lion of his tribe. Back he was hurled, and back again, but at the third time once more there came the sound of clashing swords and he too fell dead.

"Draw near! Draw near!" cried the priest. "Another has fallen! Let him who would win the Hathor draw near!"

And now man after man rushed on, to be first hurled back and then slain of the clashing swords. And at length all were slain save the Wanderer alone.

Then the priest spake:

"Wilt thou indeed rush on to doom, thou glorious man? Thou hast seen the fate of many. Be warned and turn away."

"Never did I turn from man or ghost," said the Wanderer, and drawing his short sword he came nigh warily, covering his head with his broad shield, while the priests stood back to see him die. Now, the Wanderer had marked that none were touched till they stood upon the very threshold of the doorway. Therefore he uttered a prayer to Aphrodite and came on slowly till his feet were within a bow's length of the threshold, and there he stood and listened. Now he could hear the very words of the song that the Hathor sang as she wove at her loom. So dread and sweet it was that for a while he thought no more on the Guardians of the Gate, nor of how he might win the way, nor of aught save

the song. For she was singing shrill and clear in his own dear tongue, the tongue of the Achæans:

Paint with threads of gold and scarlet, paint the battles fought for me
All the wars for Argive Helen; storm and sack by land or sea;
All the tale of loves and sorrows that have been and are to be.

Paint her lips that like a cup have pledged the lips of heroes all,
Paint her golden hair unwhitened while the many winters fall,
Paint the beauty that is mistress of the wide world and its thrall!

Paint the storms of ships and chariots, rain of arrows flying far,
Paint the waves of Warfare leaping up at Beauty like a star,
Like a star that pale and trembling hangs above the waves of War.

Paint the ancient Ilios fallen; paint the flames that scaled the sky,
When the foe was in the fortress, when the trumpet and the cry
Rang of men in their last onset, men whose hour had dawned to die.

Woe for me once loved of all men, me that never yet have known
How to love the hearts that loved me. Woe for me, who hear the moan
Of my lovers' ghosts that perished in their cities overthrown.

Is there not, of Gods or mortals, oh, ye Gods, is there not one—
One whose heart shall mate with my heart, one to love ere all be done,
All the tales of wars that shall be for my love beneath the sun?

Now the song died away, and the Wanderer once more bethought him of the wardens of the gates and of the battle which he must fight. But as he braced himself to rush on against the unseen foe the music of the singing swelled forth again, and whether he willed it or willed it not, so sweet was its magic that there he must wait till the song was done. And now stronger and more gladly rang the sweet shrill voice, like the voice of one who has made moan through the livelong winter night, and now sees the chariot of the dawn climbing the eastern sky. And thus the Hathor sang:

Ah, within my heart a hunger for the love unfelt, unknown,
Stirs at length, and wakes and murmurs as a child that wakes to moan,
Left to sleep within some silent house of strangers and alone.

So my heart awakes, and waking, moans with hunger and with cold,
Cries in pain of dim remembrance for the joy that was of old;
For the love that was, that shall be, half forgot and half foretold.

Have I dreamed it or remembered? In another world was I,
Lived and loved in alien seasons, moved beneath a golden sky,
In a golden clime where never came the strife of men that die.

But the Gods themselves were jealous, for our bliss was over great,
And they brought on us division, and the horror of their Hate,
And they set the Snake between us, and the twining coils of Fate.

And they said, "Go forth and seek each other's face, and only find
Shadows of that face ye long for, dreams of days left far behind,
Love the shadows and be loved with loves that waver as the wind.

Once more the sweet singing died away, but as the Wanderer grasped his sword and fixed the broad shield upon his arm he remembered the dream of Meriamun the Queen, which had been told him by Rei the Priest. For in that dream twain who had sinned were made three, and through many deaths and lives must seek each other's face. And now it seemed that the burden of the song was the burden of the dream.

Then he thought no more on dreams, or songs, or omens, but only on the deadly foe that stood before him wrapped in darkness, and on Helen, in whose arms he yet should lie, for so the Goddess had sworn to him in sea-girt Ithaca. He spoke no word, he named no God, but sprang forward as a lion springs from his bed of reeds; and, lo! his buckler clashed against shields that barred the way, and invisible arms seized him to hurl him back. But no weakling was the Wanderer, thus to be pushed aside by magic, but the stoutest man left alive in the whole world now that Aias, Telamon's son was dead. The priests wondered as they saw how he gave back never a step, for all the might of the wardens of the gates, but lifted his short sword and hewed down so terribly that fire leapt from the air when the short sword fell, the good short sword of Euryalus the Phæacian. Then came the clashing of the swords, and from all the golden armour that once the godlike Paris wore, ay, from buckler, helm, and greaves, and breastplates the sparks streamed up as they stream from the anvil of the smith when he smites great blows on swords made white with fire.

Swift as hail fell the blows of the unseen blades upon the golden armour, but he who wore it took no harm, nor was it so much as marked with the dint of the swords. So while the priests wondered at this miracle the viewless warders of the gate smote at the Wanderer, and the Wanderer smote at them again. Then of a sudden he knew this, that they who barred the path were gone, for no more blows fell, and his sword only cut the air.

Then he rushed on and passed behind the veil and stood within the shrine.

But as the curtains swung behind him the singing rose again upon the air, and he might not move, but stood fixed with his eyes gazing where, far up, a loom was set within the shrine. For the sound of the singing came from behind the great web gleaming in the loom, the sound of the song of Helen as she heard the swords clash and the ringing of the harness of those whose knees were loosened in death. It was thus she sang:

Clamour of iron on iron, and shrieking of steel upon steel,
Hark how they echo again!
Life with the dead is at war, and the mortals are shaken and reel,
The living are slain by the slain!

Clamour of iron on iron; like music that chimes with a song,
So with my life doth it chime,
And my footsteps must fall in the dance of Erinnys, a revel of wrong,
Till the day of the passing of Time!

Ghosts of the dead that have loved me, your love hath been vanquished of death,
But unvanquished by death is your hate;
Say, is there none that may woo me and win me of all that draw breath,
Not one but is envied of Fate?

Now the song died, and the Wanderer looked up, and before him stood three shadows of mighty men clad in armour. He gazed upon them, and he knew the blazons painted on their shields; he knew them for heroes long dead—Pirithous, Theseus, and Aias.

They looked upon him, and then cried with one voice:

"Hail to thee, Odysseus of Ithaca, son of Laertes!"

"Hail to thee," cried the Wanderer, "Theseus, Ægeus' son! Once before didst thou go down into the House of Hades, and alive thou camest forth again. Hast thou crossed yet again the stream of Ocean, and dost thou live in the sunlight? For of old I sought thee and found thee not in the House of Hades?"

The semblance of Theseus answered: "In the House of Hades I abide this day, and in the fields of asphodel. But that thou seest is a shadow, sent forth by the Queen Persephone, to be the guard of the beauty of Helen."

"Hail to thee, Pirithous, Ixion's son," cried the Wanderer again. "Hast thou yet won the dread Persephone to be thy love? And why doth Hades give his rival holiday to wander in the sunlight, for of old I sought thee, and found thee not in the House of Hades."

Then the semblance of Pirithous answered:

"In the House of Hades I dwell this day, and that thou seest is but a shadow which goes with the shadow of the hero Theseus. For where he is am I, and where he goes I go, and our very shadows are not sundered; but we guard the beauty of Helen."

"Hail to thee, Aias, Telamon's son," cried the Wanderer. "Hast thou not forgotten thy wrath against me, for the sake of those accursed arms that I won from thee, the arms of Achilles, son of Peleus? For of old in the House of Hades I spoke to thee, but thou wouldst not answer one word, so heavy was thine anger."

Then the semblance of Aias made answer: "With iron upon iron, and the stroke of bronze on bronze, would I answer thee, if I were yet a living man and looked upon the sunlight. But I smite with a shadowy spear and slay none but men foredoomed, and I am the shade of Aias who dwells in Hades. Yet the Queen Persephone sent me forth to be the guard of the beauty of Helen."

Then the Wanderer spake.

"Tell me, ye shadows of the sons of heroes, is the way closed, and do the Gods forbid it, or may I that am yet a living man pass forward and gaze on that ye guard, on the beauty of Helen?"

Then each of the three nodded with his head, and smote once upon his shield, saying:

"Pass by, but look not back upon us, till thou hast seen thy desire."

Then the Wanderer went by, into the innermost chamber of the alabaster shrine.

Now when the shadows had spoken thus, they grew dim and vanished, and the Wanderer, as they had commanded, drew slowly on up the alabaster shrine, till at length he stood on the hither side of the web upon the loom. It was a great web, wide and high, and hid all the innermost recesses of the shrine. Here he waited, not knowing how he should break in upon the Hathor.

As he stood wondering thus his buckler slipped from his loosened hand